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# Rural America AND THE Extension Service

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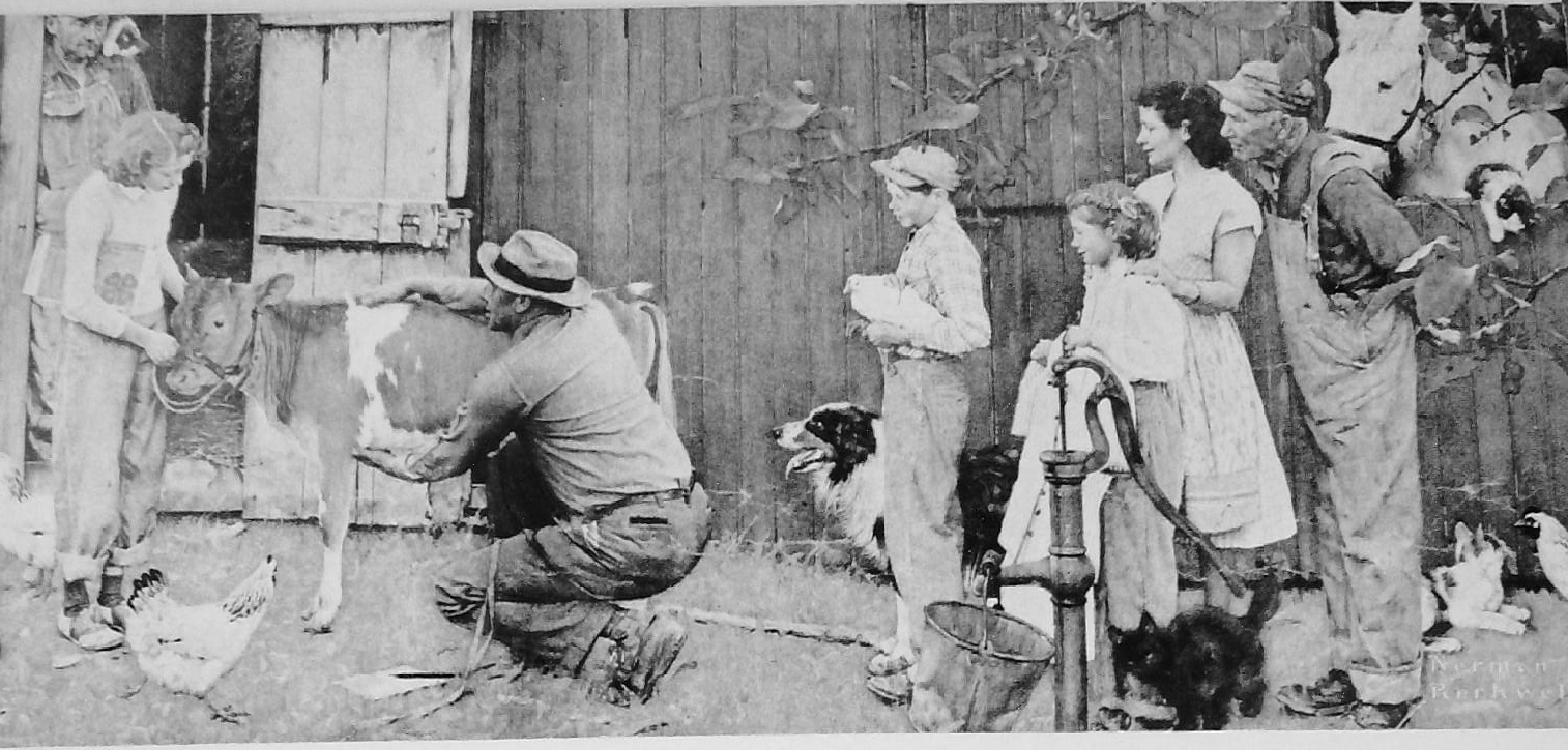


THE COUNTY AGENT

*BY*

*NORMAN ROCKWELL*

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# Rural America and the Extension Service

*A HISTORY AND CRITIQUE OF THE COOPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL AND HOME ECONOMICS EXTENSION SERVICE*

ED115/4

By
EDMUND deS. BRUNNER
and
E. HSIN PAO YANG

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This Book Is Dedicated To

MILBURN LINCOLN WILSON

*Director of Extension, United States Department of Agriculture, since 1939, who in his leadership at home and in his service abroad is the embodiment of the Extension Service at its best*

## FOREWORD

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# FOREWORD

THE countries of the world which are most developed economically have recognized the responsibility to afford technical assistance to those in which economic advancement has been retarded. This provides one of the important motives which prompted the creation of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies; for World War II forced the recognition that freedom from want throughout the world was a necessary cornerstone of permanent peace. The responsibility was recently expressed by President Truman in his inaugural address on January 20, 1949, when he declared that "We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of under-developed areas. . . . Our aim should be to help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens. . . . This should be a cooperative enterprise in which all nations work together through the United Nations and its specialized agencies wherever practicable. It must be a world-wide effort for the achievement of peace, plenty, and freedom."

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has the duty of affording technical assistance in order to increase the production of food, fiber, and forest products, improve the well-being of rural populations, and raise levels of nutrition throughout the world. It is an international extension agency concerned with widening the knowledge and extending the use of modern science and techniques. But in the last resort, the success of technical programs depends on the effective participation of farmers, foresters, and fishermen and their wives and children. This requires educational and advisory services which bring a knowledge of better methods to the producer, applicable to the conditions under which he works and lives. Hence, FAO is vitally interested in the establishment and development of such services in member countries. It is for this reason that I welcome this comprehensive

study of Agricultural Extension in the United States, and congratulate Dr. Brunner and Dr. Yang on their accomplishment.

The authors have described and evaluated "the largest rural adult educational agency in the world." There is, of course, no merit in size alone, but in addition, agricultural extension in the United States has a record of achievement which has drawn attention from many countries, and attracted many observers to examine its methods of organization and operation. At a time such as the present, when many countries are planning to establish or develop extension or advisory services to agriculture, the authors have performed a valuable service in making extension experiences in the United States available for study to a wider circle both at home and abroad.

The authors themselves have issued the warning that it would be dangerous to attempt to apply American organization, and frequently ineffective to adopt American techniques, in countries which are very different in culture, social organization, and economic development, and have fewer educational, research, and financial resources. Nevertheless, the principles which the authors enunciate have general validity, and there are many lessons to be learned from American experience provided that these principles are applied with due regard for differences in problems and needs, and in social environment.

No book is a substitute for personal investigation and discussion; but I commend the present volume for its comprehensive and objective appraisal of a significant American contribution to the advancement of farm populations, and as an important reference to those concerned with education as an essential element in the process of economic development and social betterment. It is my hope that similar studies will be made of the achievements of other countries in improving the conditions of rural people and increasing their contribution to human welfare; for an extension of knowledge on what has been done and the methods of achieving it can greatly facilitate the task of affording technical assistance and is, indeed, a part of it.

Norris E. Dodd
*Director General*
*Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*

*July 29, 1949*

# PREFACE

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THE United States of America possesses the largest rural adult education agency in the world. Its operation is a unique cooperative undertaking shared by federal, state, and local governments, with the control largely at the state level. This agency, the Cooperative Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service, has a considerable list of achievements to its credit, as is shown in this study. These achievements over its 35-year history have attracted attention and inquiries from many sources within and outside the United States. Until now there has been no single up-to-date interpretation of this educational enterprise to furnish such inquirers.[1]

This volume is therefore addressed to those who seek some knowledge of this cooperative educational activity, whether they be from other countries or from other areas of adult education within the United States. It is the conviction of the authors that adult education as a whole has much to learn from agricultural and home economics extension. It is hoped that the volume may also be of some use in recruiting workers for the Extension Service and as collateral reading in the various programs for training extension workers conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture and some of the state colleges of agriculture. Finally, it is hoped that the report may not be without interest to the United Nations, for, in the planning and implementation of giving technological assistance to the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas there may be clues to the solution of one of the besetting problems of democracy: How international agencies may approach national governments and how a central government may assist states and local units of government with funds and leadership without permitting the control to pass out of the hands of local people.

Early in 1945 the junior author of this report completed a detailed and factual study of the Extension Service which was too

[1] Since this was written, a volume entitled *Cooperative Extension Work* by Lincoln D. Kelsey and Cannon C. Hearne has been published (Ithaca, N.Y.: Comstock Publishing Company).

long to permit of wartime publication. Dr. Yang's work in his own country was too burdensome for him to undertake a revision, nor has that been possible since his return to the United States as a staff member of the Food and Agriculture Organization. Moreover, in the intervening years there have been important new developments.

The present study was therefore determined upon at the suggestion of leaders in both the United States Department of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization. It is based on Dr. Yang's study but takes into account important postwar developments and relates them to the current trends in American culture. This is important since perhaps the basic element in the success of the Extension Service has been its flexibility in fitting into cultural patterns and changing needs of the people it serves. In a sense, despite many similarities, especially with respect to the primary population groups it serves and administrative procedure, Extension is not one system but forty-eight. The procedures, programs, and policies of Extension can succeed elsewhere only to the extent that they are adapted to the culture in which they are designed to operate. What Extension has to teach to other countries, or what one state within the United States can learn from another, depends entirely upon this principle.

In this volume, therefore, the developing history and program of the United States Extension Service are viewed as the product of the changing social and economic milieu within which it functions and of which it was, and is, a part.

The discussion begins with a brief description of what the Extension Service is and how it came to be. Attention is then given to the organization and administration of the Service, first in the federal Department of Agriculture and the states and then in the counties. Since the local work could not be as effective as it is without research and the translation of that research into teachable terms, the contributions of the research or experiment stations outside Extension itself, and of the subject matter specialists within it, are next discussed. This begins to raise questions as to the multiform relationships of Extension both within the Department of Agriculture and the state colleges and outside with private or public agencies. The developing programs of the Extension Service are then described in terms of the well-recognized periods of its history, such as the two world wars, the 1920's, and the 1930's with its New Deal legislation. Program planning in

the counties is then discussed, along with the methods and procedures used for carrying out these programs among the primary constituents of Extension. The personnel responsible for implementing programs, professional and lay, and its training are next considered. In the final chapters the Extension enterprise is evaluated in terms of its own objectives and its success in meeting some of the basic problems it has been called upon to face. By way of summary, certain principles of successful Extension work are stated and briefly illustrated.

Dr. Yang's principal contribution to this work has been stated above. He has also read the volume as it now stands, critically and helpfully. The senior author was responsible for reorganizing and reducing Dr. Yang's original work, for the discussion of the developments from 1945 to the present, and for much of the interpretive analysis.

The authors gratefully acknowledge their indebtedness to many persons for assistance in the preparation of this volume, especially to members of the federal Extension staff and to a few members of the Food and Agriculture Organization. The views expressed and the interpretations made, however, are wholly the authors' and do not necessarily express the position of those who assisted them. nor of the organizations with which they are connected.

Most of all, they are indebted to Teachers College, Columbia University, which through its President, William F. Russell, arranged for the publication of this volume as a public service when budget difficulties prevented the original plans of publication from being carried out.

EDMUND DES. BRUNNER
E. HSIN PAO YANG

*May 1, 1949*

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# Rural America and the Extension Service

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# THE EXTENSION SERVICE: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT CAME TO BE

THIS book concerns a nation-wide, tax-supported organization for rural adult education in the United States. Popularly known as Extension, its full title is the Cooperative Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service. The cooperation ties together in one agency the local people through their county, the state through its college of agriculture, and the federal government through a special unit in the Department of Agriculture. The campus of this educational enterprise is the better than a billion acres in the 5½ million farms of the United States, together with thousands of rural villages. The students, actual and potential, are the 27½ million people on these farms and the even larger rural non-farm population, 15 million families in all. Of these about three-fifths are influenced by Extension in any given year.

The central task of Extension is to help these rural families help themselves by applying science, whether physical or social, to the daily routines of farming, homemaking, and family and community living. Extension has meant better homes and better farms with which to feed, clothe, and strengthen the nation, and better organized and functioning communities. It has demonstrated that social processes are affected and social changes occur when education is applied to the rural scene. Extension is out-of-school, roadside education. It faces squarely the needs and problems of farmers, their wives and children, and to a lesser extent of villagers. It dares to put its teachings to the acid test of practical workability on the land and in kitchens, homes, and communities. It does this by translating the results of scientific research into everyday practical terms. It assumes that as people use science with profit they will learn the way of scientific thinking, and that out of this constructive endeavor will grow, in the words of Director M. L. Wilson, "a rural civilization based on scientific

knowledge—a civilization in which rural people would have a way of living which would give opportunity for individual and group realization of the best values inherent within them."

Because Extension builds its program on the needs of its constituents, it is democratic in philosophy and procedure. Extension does not give orders. It is concerned with the growth and improvement of individuals. Such growth cannot occur unless the people cooperate. Cooperation cannot be forced. This democratic framework is of course indigenous to American culture. Extension must regard the attitudes and values of the people with whom it works. No program or even technique can get the desired results when not in harmony with the culture of the people. Extension knows that, if need be, the surer way is to effect cultural change by the slow but certain process of education. But before proceeding further with a description of what the Extension Service is, it is important for the reader to understand how it came to be.

## *THE SEEDS OF EXTENSION*

This agency, so successful and so well regarded by the average rural American, is only thirty-five years old. Its roots, however, can be traced to the earliest years of the nation. In his first message to Congress, George Washington urged the establishment of a national university, in which there should be a chair of agriculture entrusted with the responsibility "of diffusing information to farmers." The first President, himself the inventor of the disk plow, was no mean precursor of today's Extension agent. By experiment and demonstration on his own acres and by word of mouth he was influential among his neighbors, especially with reference to soil conservation, crop rotation, and diversified farming.

In 1785 a Society for Promoting Agriculture was organized in Philadelphia to disseminate agricultural information through publications, newspapers, articles, and lectures, and to bring about local agricultural organizations elsewhere. These initial efforts, one individual, the other organizational, were not unique. President Thomas Jefferson was also a skilled agriculturalist, the inventor of the mold board for the all-metal plow, a passionate devotee of agriculture as a way of life, and also much interested in spreading improved farm practices. State agricultural societies

sprang up in several Northeastern states and in South Carolina between 1785 and 1800.

These state agricultural societies did not make any direct contributions to actual farming. They held regular meetings for the purpose of exchanging ideas and experiences concerning agricultural activity. They also undertook to encourage the formation of county societies to which they sent speakers to give public lectures upon practical and scientific knowledge.

It is thought that direct contribution from an agricultural society was first made possible through Elkana H. Watson, who founded the Berkshire (Massachusetts) Agricultural Society in 1811. Watson conceived the idea of organizing an agricultural society on a more democratic basis. His success in developing the agricultural fair as the main educational medium for agricultural societies was later demonstrated by the widespread activities of this distinctive institution in America.

The programs followed in the fairs provided not only for the sale of animals and farm products and for competitive exhibitions with prizes, but also for some educational features, such as addresses on agricultural subjects.

The United States Agricultural Society was organized in 1852 by representatives of twenty-three states and territories. Unlike the early organizations, this Society drew its membership from men in public affairs and from men actually engaged in farming. It held annual sessions and sponsored exhibitions and field trials. It is said that this Society was influential in securing the establishment of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The United States in those days was, of course, more agricultural than it is today industrial. It was already exporting some of its farm products, at first especially cotton and tobacco, and later cereals as well. Strengthening its agriculture meant strengthening the nation, and to do so meant improving farm practice. The very struggle to tame the wilderness made the American an intensely practical person. All these early efforts and others recognized, therefore, the definite need for what today is called Extension.

### *An Early Farm Organization and Education*

Soon after the War between the States ended, the first of the national farm organizations which is still functioning, the Patrons

of Husbandry, better known now as the Grange, was founded. It stood for "the education of its members in the art and science of agriculture." In 1874, seven years after its founding, a declaration of principles contained the following paragraphs:

> We shall endeavor to advance our cause by laboring to accomplish the following objects:
>
> To develop a better and higher manhood and womanhood among ourselves. To enhance the comforts and attractions of our homes, and strengthen our attachments to our pursuits. To foster mutual understanding and cooperation. . . .
>
> We propose meeting together, talking together, working together, buying together, selling together, and, in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement, as occasion may require. . . .
>
> We shall advance the cause of education among ourselves, and for our children, by all just means within our power. We especially advocate for our agricultural and industrial colleges that practical agriculture, domestic science, and all the arts which adorn the home, be taught in their courses of study. . . .

Perhaps one of the most valuable accomplishments of the Grange was its early insistence on the much-needed coordination of the training at agricultural colleges with the needs and the interests of the farmers at large. Early in its history, the Grange advocated strongly the teaching of practical agriculture and domestic science in agricultural colleges. Prophetically it even agitated for the extension of educational facilities through the rural sections. This step, taken with considerable foresightedness by the leaders of the Grange, must have helped to some extent to open the way for the inauguration of the cooperative extension service in the agricultural colleges of later days.

### *The Colleges Begin Extension*

The growing interest of the ordinary citizen of the United States in expanding educational opportunities, already noted, had begun to bear fruit. Even in the midst of the turmoil of civil war, the Congress had passed the Morrill Land-Grant Act in 1862, setting up in each state an educational institution "where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanic arts in such manner as the legislatures of the states may respectively prescribe in order to promote the liberal and practical education

of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life."

To each such institution Congress granted an endowment in terms of federal land plus $5,000 a year. Hence these institutions are known as land-grant colleges. Interestingly enough, in the same year a Department of Agriculture was authorized by Congress, "the general design and duties of which shall be to acquire and to diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word." Education, therefore, from the first was a responsibility and a basic purpose of the United States Department of Agriculture. Today the Extension Service is the means for carrying out this directive of Congress.

It is not easy to realize that at this time, less than ninety years ago, agriculture was more of an art than a science. The body of scientific knowledge was little more than embryonic. Many practices were sanctioned by experience and repeated observation. Others were in the realm of folklore. More than one of the early professors of agriculture took to the road and visited successful farmers as one source of material for his courses. Thus early, and fortunately, were farm practice and the colleges related. Soon the colleges began experimental farms, and in 1887, in the Hatch Act, Congress provided federal assistance to set up and maintain experiment stations in every land-grant college. From then on the body of knowledge in all aspects of agriculture grew rapidly. Without this knowledge, as will be shown later, it is doubtful if the Extension Service could ever have succeeded as it has.

The purpose of securing this new knowledge was of course to benefit the farmers of the United States. It early became clear that to depend upon college classroom teaching to bring agricultural practices in line with the findings of scientific research would be at best a very slow process. The colleges began to consider this problem.

While these developments were going on an interesting adult education movement had sprung up, combining instruction, recreation, and entertainment, and known as the Chautauqua movement. Quite apart from the considerable program at its headquarters, some of America's top publicists, lecturers, and entertainers traveled from town to town each summer and, like a circus, dispensed culture under a tent to the populace which crowded in.

In 1892 Pennsylvania State College, soon followed by Cornell

and Illinois Universities, began to adapt this system to their extension problems, under "Superintendents of Agricultural College Extension." In 1906 Iowa State College formally started its agricultural extension work, which purported to "conduct experiments in the various portions of the State, and in giving instructions wherever, in the judgment of the college authorities, it shall be advisable.... The college authorities are authorized to give instruction in corn and stock judging at agricultural fairs, institutes, and clubs, and to aid in conducting short courses of instruction at suitable places throughout the State; to give lectures and demonstrations on the growing of crops and fruits, on stock raising, dairying, land drainage, and kindred subjects, including domestic science."[1] Following the examples of those pioneering institutions, interest in the extension work of the agricultural colleges grew rapidly.

Other agencies, including experiment stations, which were anxious to have their results quickly applied, state and county school systems, and farm organizations all began to enter the field. The need for a more systematic organization arose.

Consequently, in 1905, a Committee on Extension Work was created by the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations. This committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Kenyon L. Butterfield, recommended:

> That each college represented in this association organize as soon as practicable a department of extension teaching in agriculture, coordinate with other departments or divisions of the agricultural work, with a competent director in charge and, if possible, with a corps of men at his disposal. This department should take on, just as far as possible, all phases of extension teaching now performed in other ways.[2]

By 1907 it was reported that thirty-nine agricultural colleges not previously doing so were carrying different types of extension work. A fair sample of these different extension activities may be found in the following program from Purdue University, Indiana:

> Lecturing at farmers' institutes; holding normal-institute schools for institute lectures; providing short courses in agriculture; equipping and accompanying railway specials; assisting at teachers' institutes;

[1] Barton Morgan, *A History of the Extension Service of Iowa State College* (Ames, Iowa: Collegiate Press, Inc., 1934), p. 25.

[2] Alfred C. True, *A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States, 1785–1923* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1928), p. 49.

providing courses in corn and stock judging in district centers; holding summer schools for teachers; sending out field specialists to give advice to farmers; providing courses of study for agricultural high schools; preparing and sending out bulletins, reports, and circulars; preparing articles for the public press; conducting and publishing an agricultural journal; conducting cooperative experiments in agriculture; providing educational exhibits at fairs; organizing excursions to the college by agricultural associations and individual farmers; conducting experiments and demonstration tests on county poor farms; and organizing farmers' clubs, women's clubs, and boys' and girls' clubs.[3]

In 1908 the committee reviewed its original proposal and strongly advocated the desirability of elevating "the extension work of the land-grant colleges to the place where it belongs—a line of endeavor coordinate with that of research through the experiment station and that of teaching through the college courses."[4] Strong reasons were presented. Most eloquent was the following:

> Finally, and most important of all, we would urge upon the director of extension work and the administration of the institution the prime necessity of getting into the public mind a thorough understanding of what extension work is. It is not a scheme to advertise the college. It is not a plan to trap students for the college, or even to get boys and girls interested in agricultural schools and colleges generally. It is fundamentally a means of teaching the people out of school about agriculture and country life in all its phases. It is an educational proposition. Its aim should be to reach every farmer and his family.[5]

During this period, it is to be noted that the name "Extension Service" was formally adopted by the colleges. The idea of this newly-given name was to indicate the type of work that was being done.

*Farmers' Institutes*

Perhaps the most popular of these early Extension activities were the farmers' institutes. These were begun in 1863 in Massachusetts. By 1899 all but one of the states were giving this type of work. In the same year, over 2,000 institutes were held in the country, with a total attendance of over 500,000 farmers.[6] Public funds spent in these institutes amounted to $150,000.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 53. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

The growing popularity of the farmers' institutes between 1900 and 1915 was attributed to the increasing aids given by the state and federal governments. In 1914 there were 8,861 institutes with a total attendance of 3,050,150 farmers; funds from the state, colleges, and other sources amounted to $449,882.[7]

The programs of the farmers' institutes usually ran from two to five days. Lectures dealing with farm and home topics were given in the forenoon and afternoon sessions. The evening meetings were largely social and inspirational in character, with music, education, recitations, and other popular interesting activities. Every institute made homemaking an indispensable part of the program. Women shared with the men the full benefits of the lectures and discussions.

## *DEMONSTRATION WORK IS BORN*

About this time the work and vision of a dynamic leader, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, exerted a powerful influence toward the organization of Extension on the present cooperative basis and contributed a method of teaching still basic in its operations.

In 1885 Dr. Knapp resigned as president of Iowa State College to manage a million-acre farm development and colonization project in Louisiana. Despite enthusiastic efforts little land was sold. "In desperation," Dr. Knapp afterward recalled, "we resorted to demonstration." A few good Middle Western farmers were subsidized to begin farming anew in scattered townships of this tract under Dr. Knapp's direction. These men demonstrated that the land was highly productive when properly handled. The rest of the land was soon sold, and Dr. Knapp learned the power of demonstration.

In 1902, when most men of his age, nearly seventy, would begin to think of retirement, Dr. Knapp accepted an appointment from the United States Department of Agriculture to establish and supervise a few demonstration farms in the South. These farms were operated under government subvention without the direct, active participation of the farm people.

The results did not satisfy Dr. Knapp. The farms, moreover, were too few and too scattered to be influential. Dr. Knapp proposed a community demonstration farm, operated by a farmer

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

chosen by the community at his own expense, but guaranteed against loss.

The Porter "Community Demonstration Farm" near Terrell, Texas, was the first launched under this plan in 1903. The Chamber of Commerce put up $900 to guarantee the farmer against loss provided he farmed seventy acres of his land under the supervision of Dr. Knapp. At the end of the year, the farmer reported that he had made $700 more than he would have by his usual farming methods. The farm received wide publicity and attracted the attention of many farmers.

In the same year the cotton boll weevil was sweeping eastward through Texas. Farmers and businessmen called for federal help to stave off ruin. The technique used on the Porter Demonstration Farm seemed to offer one method of combating the pest. The Secretary of Agriculture allotted $40,000 of a $250,000 emergency appropriation to be used by Dr. Knapp to establish small cotton demonstration farms, to prove that cotton could still be grown despite the weevil if improved methods were used. Cooperation was freely given by the press, the railroads, and local business. "Special agents" were appointed to visit the farms chosen for demonstrations and to give instructions. Other farmers, called cooperators, were given instructions by mail and on the demonstration farms if they agreed to carry out the suggested practices. The success of these local efforts was remarkable. By 1904, twenty-four agents were employed in three states and 7,000 farmers had agreed to serve as demonstrators.

The campaign elicited the interest of the General Education Board of New York in the possibility of testing the educational value of demonstration methods to agricultural education in general. In 1906 the board agreed to provide funds for extending the work to three additional states. Negroes were included in the program, through the cooperation of Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes. By 1908 there were employed in eleven states 157 agents, 85 of whom were paid by the Board.

Even in the stress of the emergency Dr. Knapp conceived the demonstration method in broad terms. He believed it was designed not only to reform agriculture by making it a profitable and more pleasurable occupation, but to improve rural conditions and enrich rural life and thus make rural residence desirable. Technical skill was to be but a means toward some basic ends, expressed in terms of human values.

Inevitably the success of demonstration instruction brought more requests for this service than could possibly be met. District agents, assigned to from six to even twenty counties, were forced to spread their work rather thinly. In 1908 Knapp proposed that there be an agent in each county. One county in Texas had operated on that basis since 1906.

This system of concentration met wide support. Besides the demonstration work it gave strength and effectiveness to other forms of extension teaching too. The system soon became widespread. In 1910, 450 county agents were reported working in 455 counties in twelve states. By 1911 the number of agents had increased to 580. In 1914 more than 700 counties in the Southern states had county agricultural agents at work. With the appointment of county agents, the "community" farms were discontinued and agents gave their attention to "demonstrations" by individual farmers, on their own farms and entirely at their own expense.

The remarkable success of Dr. Knapp's demonstration method was no accident. He knew the farmer is naturally conservative, that he is slow to change unless convinced beyond a shadow of doubt that it is wise to do so. He was sure no farmer could be talked into a new method, but he was equally convinced that the farmer would quickly grasp new principles and methods if their value was demonstrated in terms of the conditions with which he himself was familiar. This could be accomplished by the itinerant teacher schooled to make field, garden, orchard, or kitchen at once the classroom and the textbook. Dr. Knapp's own approach to farmers was adroit. He presented himself as a sympathetic, plain man able to discuss practical matters in simple terms.

Knapp also used youth both for their own sakes and as another method of reaching their elders. A few experimental boys' clubs were organized on a demonstration basis in 1907 and 1908. Two years later all agents were instructed to begin this type of work and girls' clubs were added. Thus Knapp's plan was also the forerunner of the far-flung work with rural boys, girls, and youth now under Extension auspices and known as 4–H clubs. This youth work began even before demonstration work for farm women was initiated in 1913.

It is worth pointing out that this plan of teaching by doing, of utilizing life situations as the vital content of education for rural adults, had been proved successful and was well established as ordinary daily procedure by the time that a few courageous and

progressive educators, especially John Dewey, were making tentative experiments in a few urban schools to revitalize childhood education by using the experiences of the pupils. It is significant of the difference between adult and especially rural adult education and public school education that in the former such methods were welcomed and acclaimed while in the latter the battle has not yet been wholly won. True, Knapp encountered some opposition, even within the Department of Agriculture. But some of it sprang from the struggle for agency prestige, and all of it, sincere and otherwise, was soon engulfed in a tidal wave of approval that swept from the farms of the South to the White House itself when President Wilson wrote of it: "It constitutes the kind of work which it seems to me is the only kind that generates real education; that is to say, the demonstration process and the personal touch with the man who does the demonstrating."

## *THE COUNTRY LIFE COMMISSION*

The preceding section has brought the story of the influences entering into the organization of the Extension Service up to the time of its founding. But before discussing it, attention must be given to one other influence of importance, namely the work and report of a Country Life Commission appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt in August, 1908, with Liberty Hyde Bailey as chairman. This Commission reported the following year. The so-called country life movement in the United States is usually dated from the publication of its report. The Commission held that rural America had not reached as high a development as urban. It found a deep-seated desire among rural people "to make rural civilization as effective and satisfying as other civilization." The Commission proposed to remedy the lack of adjustment between city and country, not by treating symptoms, but rather by giving attention to fundamental problems and the processes by which country life could be made what it was capable of becoming.

The Commission found that the most fundamental problem was "lack of the proper kind of education." The "redirected education" for which the Commission called was to be based on a school serving as a natural and organic center of the community, giving first consideration to the pressing problems and primary interests of the people. This educational program was to be carried on into "continuation" work for adults. Among other

things this called for expansion of the extension work which had been developing for fifteen years. The Commission stated:

> The consideration of the educational problem raises the greatest single question that has come before the Commission, and which the Commission has to place before the American people. Education has now come to have vastly more significance than the mere establishing and maintaining of schools. The education motive has been taken into all kinds of work with the people, directly in their homes and on their farms, and it reaches mature persons as well as youths. . . .
>
> The arousing of the people must be accomplished in terms of their daily lives, or of their welfare. For the country people this means that it must be largely in terms of agriculture. Some of the colleges of agriculture are now doing this kind of work effectively, although on a pitiably small scale as compared with the needs. This is extension work, by which is meant all kinds of educational effort directly with the people, both old and young, at their homes and on their farms; it comprises all educational work that is conducted away from the institution and for those who cannot go to schools and colleges.
>
> The best extension work now proceeding in this country—if measured by the effort to reach the people in their homes and on their own ground—is that coming from some of the colleges of agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture. Within the last five or ten years, the colleges of agriculture have been able to attack the problem of rural life in a new way.
>
> This extension work includes such efforts as local agricultural surveys, demonstrations on farms, nature-study and other work in schools, boys' and girls' clubs of many kinds, crop organizations, redirection of rural societies, reading clubs, library extension, lectures, traveling schools, farmers' institutes, inspections of herds, barns, crops, orchards and farms, publications of many kinds, and similar educational effort directly in the field.
>
> To accomplish these ends, we suggest the establishment of a nation-wide extension work. The first or original work of the agricultural branches of the land-grant colleges was academic in the old sense; later there was added the great field of experiment and research; there now should be added the third coordinate branch, comprising extension work, without which no college of agriculture can adequately serve its state. It is to the extension department of these colleges, if properly conducted, that we must now look for the most effective rousing of the people on the land.[8]

The Commission then phrased a specific policy recommendation to each state college of agriculture, to organize "a complete

[8] The Commission on Country Life, *Report of the Commission on Country Life* (New York: Sturgis and Walton Co., 1911), pp. 125–127.

department of extension . . . designed to forward not only the business of agriculture, but sanitation, education, homemaking, and all interests of country life." The last phrase, it turned out, was very significant. To the Commission, agriculture was not only a profession but a civilization. "If agriculture represents a civilization," the chairman wrote, "then the homemaking phase of country life is as important as the field farming phase. As is the home, so is the farm; and as the farm, so is the home." From its inception home economics was an integral and important aspect of Extension.

## *THE SERVICE IS ORGANIZED*

A climate of opinion favorable to Extension had obviously been built up by 1913. The South, where much of the experience in the use of demonstration had been gained, and where the General Education Board funds had been spent, was solidly behind an expansion of the enterprise. The land-grant colleges had, as early as 1908, endorsed the principle of federal aid to all states for extension work, pointing out that the federal government had created these colleges and was already aiding their experiment station research. The bill then introduced had not been passed, but early in the first session of the 62d Congress, in 1912, no fewer than sixteen bills had been introduced for the purpose of granting federal funds for extension work.

Of these a bill by Representative Asbury F. Lever of South Carolina conformed more closely than others to the ideas of the land-grant colleges. After conferences between the executive committee of their association and several other organizations in 1912, a modified bill was introduced jointly by Representative Lever and Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia. After hearings and various changes as a result of the legislative debates, what was known as the Smith-Lever Act was finally passed in 1914.

### *What the Smith-Lever Law Provided*

Space forbids reproducing the entire law. Its most significant features follow:

1. It provided that extension work in agriculture and home economics should be carried on by the land-grant colleges in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. Cooperation was no empty phrase. The local people, acting

through their state colleges, initiated the plans for the work in each state. Greater participation and leadership was required to effectuate this cooperation than had been needed in the past. The plans had to be mutually agreed upon.

2. The extension work, in the language of the Act, was "to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same." Practical demonstrations were also provided for, thus perpetuating Dr. Knapp's major contribution. The audience was to be persons not attending or resident in a land-grant college. The focus was therefore rural adult education, the content of which was very broadly defined in the debates on the Act but not within its phraseology.

3. Each state was to receive $10,000 annually from federal funds, and the following year additional amounts, prorated on the basis of rural population, from a federal fund of $600,000, which should increase by $500,000 annually for seven years and continue thereafter at a total of $4,100,000, making a total of $4,580,000 in 1923 when the maximum was reached. (Ref. Smith-Lever Act, Section 3.)

4. The additional amounts above the basic grant of $10,000 were prorated among the states in proportion to their rural population and were available only when matched by state or local funds raised or contributed within the state.

This last provision, requiring financial participation, is very important. It is perhaps the secret of the high degree of cooperation which has existed between the counties, state, and federal governments in their combined service for farm people. It made the local people regard the Service not as something offered to them from outside, which they could take or ignore as they pleased, but as theirs by right of their own support and participation. This particular provision has approved itself to others as well. Several of the regional commissions of the Conference on the Contribution of Extension Methods and Techniques Toward the Rehabilitation of War-Torn Countries, held by the United States Department of Agriculture in September, 1944, with the assistance of individuals from nearly thirty countries, strongly urged that the peasant farmers contribute, if only a mite, to any Extension program set up to deal with postwar problems.

5. Finally, for purposes of this discussion, it is important to

note that each college receiving the benefits of the Act was required to send an annual statement to the Secretary of Agriculture covering its use of the funds. This audit was the only control over program lodged in the federal government. It was simply a device for insuring that the funds granted the states were spent within the purposes of the Act.

From the point of view of program, the Act provided for the development of Extension through an itinerant agricultural adviser in each county, called in most states a county agent. His responsibility was to give leadership and direction along all lines of rural activity, technical, social, and economic. He soon became the voice, the eyes, and the ears of the college in his county. He early gave attention to the problems of marketing, as the discussions on the bill recognized he should. Increased production, while desirable, was not an end in itself. The farmer needed to be taught how to get a fair and full return for his crops. The Act also placed work in home economics and with boys and girls on a firm footing. Interestingly enough, it was in the work with farm women that Knapp's big contribution was carried over in the title of the workers: home demonstration agents.

As launched, then, the Act provided federal assistance to an educational program that encompassed the whole farm family. It recognized the basic importance of agriculture, of its practitioners and their families, to the nation. It set up a legal mechanism which has stood the tests of the intervening years, in large part because its philosophy and provisions were consonant with the values and attitudes of the people, particularly the farm people of the United States.

The whole farm family approach is one of the significant contributions the Extension Service has to offer. In some countries which have organized somewhat similar activities, the program has been exclusively agricultural. Subsequent research has shown that the caliber and character of the farm homemaker was one of the most influential factors in determining the success or failure of the farm enterprise. That this was sensed thus early in the history of Extension is perhaps a tribute to the countless women who as the partners of their men took their seats in the covered wagons that trekked westward in the earlier half of the nineteenth century and even later, who shared in the hardships of the pioneer period as the land was cleared and houses succeeded the rough lean-tos of initial settlement, and who bore their

children far from medical aid or the comforts of civilization.

It was of course true that the impetus for the organization of the Service was economic. Though the farms still raised much of what they consumed of food, fiber, and fuel, agriculture had become commercialized. It is no accident that the first considerable growth of Extension was in the cotton South, for a higher proportion of this crop than of any other went to the market place, at home and abroad. The assault of the boll weevil threatened a region with economic ruin. There were, of course, some emergency measures to meet this threat; but the basic, long-time answer was in educational terms, and the teaching program from the first encompassed both the farm and the home. The results have abundantly confirmed the wisdom of that philosophy.

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# EXTENSION ORGANIZATION: FEDERAL AND STATE

THE passage of the Smith-Lever law, establishing the Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service on a national basis, was of course but a first step, a chart for future cooperative action. The modes of that cooperation had to be agreed upon. Moreover, many varying extension procedures were already being followed in the states, despite the progress made by the land-grant colleges in achieving some similarity in organization and terminology. The states were already receiving some aid for specific extension activities, and the United States Department of Agriculture had been empowered to conduct demonstrations and do certain other forms of extension work.

## *MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING*

To remedy this situation, the Secretary of Agriculture proposed to the land-grant colleges that they pool all their extension funds and make the national program of extension work a coherent whole. This idea was consummated in the drafting of a memorandum of understanding which was accepted and signed by the authorities of several state agricultural colleges. This general plan is now in effect in all but two states and in Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico. California, which did not sign the memorandum, and Illinois, which did and later withdrew, however, receive funds and operate in effect as do the other states.

Under this memorandum the state agricultural colleges agreed:

(1). To organize and maintain a definite and distinct administrative division for the management and conduct of extension work in agriculture and home economics, with a responsible leader selected by the college and satisfactory to the Department of Agriculture.

(2). To administer through such Extension Division thus organized any and all funds it has or may hereafter receive for such work from appro-

priations made by Congress or the State Legislature, by allotment from its Board of Trustees, or from any other source.

(3). To cooperate with the United States Department of Agriculture in all extension work in agriculture and home economics which said Department is or shall be authorized by Congress to conduct in the state.

On its part the United States Department of Agriculture agreed to organize and maintain an administrative office to represent the Department in the general supervision of all cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics and to administer the federal funds granted to the states under the Act. The Department further agreed to carry on all demonstrations and other forms of extension work in cooperation with the state agricultural colleges as indicated above.

The memorandum also spelled out certain organizational procedures. Each state college agreed to set up an Extension Division headed by a Director of Extension, appointed by the college and approved by the Secretary of Agriculture. In practice this approval has become practically *pro forma*. Individual project agreements for special activities were provided for. Both the colleges and the Department gave official status to all agents appointed for any sphere of Extension work. These agents, down to and including those in the counties, are hence joint representatives. All publications are plainly marked to indicate their cooperative nature.[1] Finally, provision was made for abrogating the agreement by either cooperating body.

The philosophy behind this agreement was identical with that of the law itself. The heart of it was well stated by Representative Lever: "... the principles involved are those of cooperation, the Federal Government aiding by advice and assistance in coordinating effort and the States performing the more important details of local work. This bill places the responsibility for the actual conduct of the work proposed in the agricultural college and provides specifically for the adjustment of work to local conditions through a cooperative relationship established between the college of agriculture and the Secretary of Agriculture." It is quite possible that if the responsibility and in effect the control of the program had not been placed in the state colleges, fewer of them would have ratified the memorandum. There were those who regarded the

[1] The usual formula is "Extension Service, College of Agriculture, University of ————, United States Department of Agriculture cooperating."

Smith-Lever Act with alarm and saw in it the Trojan horse through which the federal power would capture control of the colleges.

The chairman of the Executive Committee of the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations made this feature of local autonomy central in his advocacy of the law in behalf of the Association. He stated at the hearings:

> It looks to us as if we should get closer together, with a better organization, a more efficient expenditure of money, and a better understanding than ever before. These colleges and stations are the places where the Federal Government has been pouring in money—for 50 years in the colleges and 25 years in the stations. . . . Now comes along the extension field, which admittedly is the largest area, and therefore the least subject to supervision, in which it is proposed that before the money is expended the Department of Agriculture, representing the Federal Government, and these colleges, representing the State governments, shall get together in a friendly council and lay out the projects, and provide, as far as human agencies can provide, for the wise, economical, and efficient expenditure of this money. Gentlemen, it seems to me that that feature of the bill is the wisest feature of the whole matter and ought to commend itself to State and Federal agencies alike. . . .

The procedure set up has stood the test of time, as will be shown later. It is a device by which the resources of the national government are placed at the disposal of its several parts, without permitting the "administrative state" to take control of operations. As such it preserves democratic procedures. If this had not been provided for, the freedom of the Extension Service to adapt itself to local needs and conditions, which is one of its greatest strengths, would have been seriously restricted. Varied approaches to fit varying cultural backgrounds of local communities would have been all but prevented. Indeed, the understanding was itself a reflection of a strong cultural trait of rural Americans, namely to keep the control of agencies serving local communities so far as possible in or close to local hands.

## *EXTENSION ORGANIZATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE*

The new agency was now ready to function. Administratively it was placed in a so-called State Relations Service, which represented the Secretary of Agriculture in all matters involving

departmental and state cooperation. This Service had a director, an Office concerned with Experiment Stations, one with Extension work in the South, another for the Northern and Western states, and an Office of Home Economics.

As the Department of Agriculture and the colleges became accustomed to working in yoke and as the work of the various offices grew, it was natural that changes in the administrative structure should be made. The research work with the state experiment stations was made an independent agency within the Department. The research work in home economics became a separate bureau concerned with home economics and with human nutrition. All Extension activities were combined under their own director, and as of July 1, 1923, the federal office of Cooperative Extension Service comprised four divisions:

1. Projects, Inspection, and Extension Methods. In this Division four sections were created to deal respectively with the Eastern, North Central, Southern, and Western states
2. Subject-matter Specialists
3. Reports and Studies of the Efficiency of Extension Work
4. Visual Instruction and Editorial Work

In 1925 these were expanded to six divisions as follows:

1. Reports and Efficiency Studies
2. Visual Instruction and Editorial Work
3. Extension Work in the Eastern States
4. Extension Work in the Southern States
5. Extension Work in the Western States
6. Subject-matter Specialists

There is no need, in terms of the purposes of this document, to detail the various changes made through the 1920's and 1930's, as the work developed and the needs shifted. Suffice it to say that the tendency was to dignify new interests as they arose with a separate and often very small division. As time went on these were frequently combined as sections of a functional division concerned with closely related activities. Geographic considerations, while safeguarded, were minimized as major divisions.

## *THE FEDERAL ORGANIZATION TODAY*

These trends toward a structure based on functions will become apparent as the organization under which the Extension Service

operates today within the Department of Agriculture is described.

The Extension Service is the agency through which the various bureaus and agencies of the Department of Agriculture channel information and educational material to the field. It is in charge of a director who represents the Secretary of Agriculture in his relations to all cooperative Extension work conducted by the state colleges of agriculture, the counties, and the local units of farmers' organizations. Associated with the director are a group of administrative officials, liaison officers, and subject-matter specialists. The federal office has the responsibility for developing an understanding of the various national programs and policies affecting agriculture. It encourages rural people to utilize fully all available resources in solving current problems and in meeting new situations arising out of changing economic, social, and political conditions. It is to stimulate rural people to improve health and nutritional conditions, economic welfare, family and community life, and the general standard of living. It must review the plans of work and budgets of the states. To accomplish these ends the Service has six divisions.

1. Division of Business Administration

   *Administration*—Plans and coordinates personnel, fiscal, and other business procedures.

   *Personnel*—Conducts personnel activities for Washington and field, including personnel classification, appointments, transfers, promotions, retirement.

   *Budget*—Directs budgetary functions including annual estimates and justifications, allocates funds for various projects, prepares apportionments.

   Four other sections direct all administrative accounting, payroll audits, prepare financial statements, review state budgets, certify states for payments due, make purchases, maintain property, general files, and handle mail.

2. Division of Extension Information

   *Administration*—Develops and effectuates programs of visual and information aids for educational use by state and county extension workers; serves as coordinating and guiding agency for agricultural college editors in the states and territories; teaches extension workers how to prepare and use information and visual techniques; and heads the public relations program of the Extension Service.

*Publications*—Manages the Extension publications program, consisting of the Extension Service Review, annual reports, other publications, integration of federal and state popular bulletins, and related activities.

*Press-Radio*—Correlates information on Extension activities and makes public reports through press, radio, magazines, and other channels; correlates information on vital Department of Agriculture program developments and advises state extension administrative and editorial officers.

*Distribution*—Distributes materials, including slidefilms, movies, photographs, charts, publications, press, and other written materials.

3. Division of Field Studies and Training

*Education Research*—Develops and directs educational research programs for evaluating the effectiveness of Extension teaching methods; conducts in cooperation with state and county extension workers, field studies of Extension work in agriculture, home economics and 4–H clubs; directs readability analysis of written materials.

*Research and Training*—Plans and assists in establishing cooperative educational research and personnel training centers, and cooperates with the states in the administration and supervision of those centers.

*Personnel Training*—Plans and assists in establishing training programs and procedures for the continuous improvement of extension personnel at all levels of organization; also prepares teaching materials, and conducts courses.

*Foreign Student Program*—Plans training programs for the students from other countries studying the organization and activities of the Extension Service.

4. Division of Subject Matter

*Program Development*—Develops cooperative programs between the Extension Service and agencies of the Department to provide state and county extension forces with results of research and information regarding national programs for agriculture.

Assists state extension services by adapting technical subject matter to the needs of rural people in all pertinent phases of agriculture and home economics.

5. Division of Field Coordination

*Supervision*—Maintains central direction of state and county exten-

sion work and supervises the work of about 8,500 county extension agents in order that national standards and principles in organizing and conducting extension work on the county level may be followed throughout the country.

*Coordination*—Develops and coordinates state and regional extension programs based on actual situations and needs of farm people.

*State and County Work*—Furnishes advice and assistance to state and county extension workers in the development, organization, and conduct of agricultural, home economics, and 4–H club work.

6. Division of Agricultural Economics

*Program Development*—Supervises the development of extension work in the fields of farm management, marketing, farm credit, agricultural outlook, general economics, and rural sociology. Aids in the exchange of methods and techniques for conducting more effective programs in these fields.

*Research and Marketing*—In cooperation with RMA Administrator, outlines procedures, reviews projects and budgets, recommends allocation of funds, and coordinates RMA extension projects with established educational programs in marketing.

*Coordination*—Coordinates the work with that of other divisions of the Extension Service. Performs liaison functions between the bureaus and agencies of the Department of Agriculture, other governmental agencies engaged in economics work, and the federal and state extension services.

*Appraisal*—Reviews, recommends changes and approves state projects and annual plans of work, prepares reports and evaluates results and accomplishments of extension programs in farm management, marketing, general economics, and rural sociology.[2]

The total staff of the federal Extension office is slightly less than 200 persons, about evenly divided between professional and executive personnel and clerical. It is quite obvious from the size of this staff that the United States Department of Agriculture has no authority over the states. It is not a regulatory body. It exists to serve the needs of the field. It exerts leadership, but by democratic means, through persuasion and suggestion. The heart of the

[2] The material above is based on a chart of the internal structure of the federal Extension office as approved June, 1948.

Extension program is in the states, and to the state administrative organization the discussion now turns.

## *STATE ORGANIZATION*

On the state level, the Extension Service operates as a department or division of the state agricultural college. The administrative head is the Extension director. He holds an equal rank with that of the dean of resident teaching and the director of the experiment station. In his administrative capacity, the state Extension director may be directly responsible to the dean of agriculture or to the president of the college. Working under the Extension director is a group of people consisting of one or more assistant directors, a supervisory staff, subject-matter specialists, editors and publicity agents, with supporting clerical helpers, and a group of field agents, the county Extension workers.

### *State Extension Director*

The state Extension director occupies a strategic position in the Extension Service system. He is the leader responsible for the operation of this system in the state. His leadership was clearly stated in the "Memorandum of Understanding" between the land-grant colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture.

In law as well as in practice, the state Extension director is responsible for the administration and execution of all the duties and obligations agreed upon by the land-grant colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The director, in a sense, employs or recommends to the board of trustees or regents, all members of the Extension staff. He administers all funds, looks after all projects and plans, examines and approves all publications, and serves as the contact officer with the United States Department of Agriculture.

Although procedures vary among the states, a summary of the duties of the Extension director made some years ago is reasonably accurate today in terms of the average situation. It is therefore quoted in full.

A. The State director's office usually assumes immediate direction of all matters relating to:
   1. Administration of State and Federal extension laws.
   2. Finances—including purchase of equipment and supplies; financial arrangements with counties, etc.

3. Plan of organization, functions to be performed and how best handled.
4. Assignment of duties and delegation of authority.
5. Policies and operative procedures to be followed.
6. Personnel—appointments, salary scales, promotions.
7. Relationships with Federal Extension Service and other Federal agencies.
8. Relationships with experiment station, making available the results of research, and suggesting problems needing further study.
9. Relationships with State departments, farm organizations, and other agencies concerned with rural problems.
10. Integration and coordination of activities in terms of common objectives.
11. Accounting of moneys expended and results obtained.

B. The director supervises directly the members of the extension staff on the next lower administrative level, i.e., State leaders of agricultural agents, home demonstration, 4–H Club and specialists' work.[3]

The functions of the officers named in the previous paragraph will now be considered. These individuals are indispensable to the Extension director in carrying out his responsibilities.

*Supervisors*

In any organization such as Extension, with the professional staff in the larger states running to several hundred persons, the function of supervision becomes highly important. A group of Extension administrators and supervisors defined supervision "as the management of personnel to carry out the purposes of administration."

The purposes of administration in the case of Extension are, of course, to carry out the requirements of the basic legislation and to facilitate attaining the enlarging and living objectives of the Service formulated under that general legislation. With respect to these objectives more will be said later. But in a chapter concerning Extension organization at federal and state levels, it is fitting to point out that these objectives and therefore the purposes of administration in any given state are formulated by various means, often in combination. In some states the Extension Service enjoys the cooperation of a state council of lay men and lay women

[3] Extension Studies and Teaching Section, "The Extension Director's Job" (USDA Extension Service, Division of Cooperative Extension Stencil 37–39).

who help it to formulate policies and sometimes programs. Again, this necessary activity is the work of a staff committee which embraces both county and state personnel in its membership. Rarely and with decreasing frequency do such formulations issue solely from the state Extension office.

The chief function of administration is to enable the work of the Extension Service to get done as quickly and efficiently as possible. Obviously one of the hazards at this point lies in the field staff working under diverse conditions with diverse groups of people. Supervision then becomes necessary, and on a fairly continuous and systematic basis. The supervisor is the mouthpiece of the state, the eyes and ears of the director. He interprets Extension objectives, methods, and procedures to the county personnel and often to the public. He aids the local agent in solving some of his problems. He brings back to the state office information as to the problems, needs, and attitudes of the local agent and his people.

*Objectives of Supervisors*

Karl Knaus and Cannon Hearne, both of the federal Extension staff, defined the objectives of supervision as follows:

1. A sound, well-balanced rural program in every county.
2. A coordinated approach to solutions of the problems of rural people, utilizing all the resources of rural people, the Extension Service, and cooperating groups.
3. A strong, representative group of informed people who act as a local sponsoring organization and assist in planning, organizing, financing, and directing county extension work.
4. An adequate staff of county extension workers interested in rural affairs and with the imagination, personality, technical training, experience, and judgment to enlist rural people in self-effort to solve their own problems.
5. A trained county personnel with a knowledge of—(*a*) The aims and objectives of extension work, (*b*) their own duties and responsibilities, (*c*) effective methods and techniques of extension education, (*d*) techniques of organizing and administering a county extension service.
6. County financial support to provide adequate county staff, office and travel facilities, and teaching equipment.
7. Effective working relations within the Extension Service and with other related groups.
8. A general understanding of extension policies, purposes, objec-

tives, and accomplishments by both rural and urban people.
9. County extension workers availing themselves of opportunities for professional improvement.
10. High morale of county staff with desirable attitudes and with a satisfaction in their work.[4]

*Functions of Supervisors*

To carry out these objectives the supervisor has to perform a considerable number of functions beyond those noted above. He usually assists in selecting the professional personnel for his counties and has some responsibilities for induction training if the agent is not experienced. He must review the activities in any given county and guide in the formulation of a well-balanced program with proper coordination of the various aspects provided for. He must participate in the in-service training of county workers and promote their morale. He must help maintain a sound situation within a county and healthy cordial relationships with other agencies. This involves meeting with the local people and often cultivating the county appropriations body. He must explain proposed new activities and perhaps help train the local volunteer leaders of Extension if the new program is locally approved.

*Titles of Supervisors*

The persons who carry out these important and varied duties are variously named in the several states. In some states they are known as state leaders. There is a state leader of agricultural agents, another of home demonstration agents, and one for 4–H club work. In small states these leaders do all of the supervision themselves. In larger states there are additional supervisory personnel. These persons are usually called district agents and supervise the Extension field workers in from ten to twenty or more counties. Much of this supervision can only be done on the field in the county offices, though helpful literature and of course personal letters can be and are used.

*Problems of Supervision*

In many states the supervisor when in a county office must check the records and examine the books. New agents, of course,

[4] Karl Knaus and C. C. Hearne, *Extension Supervisors* (USDA Extension Service Circular 409, August, 1943), p. 1.

particularly need assistance with respect to such routine matters. But it is all too easy for a supervisor to become so involved with the technicalities of administrative and office procedure as to neglect some of the more difficult responsibilities noted earlier in this discussion. Rigid overemphasis on regulations on the part of the supervisor may create misunderstanding if not open conflict, which is likely to restrain the county Extension workers from seeking help and advice from the supervisor. If this happens the county staff is not only little helped but is frequently irritated as well. The main functions of supervision are forgotten, its main purposes defeated.

This chapter has described the organizational structure of Extension and the functions of the administrative personnel. The remaining important group of state Extension workers are the subject-matter specialists. They have no administrative responsibilities. Their unique contribution to the program will be discussed in another connection in Chapter 4.

The best of organization on the state level would be of little avail in carrying out the major purposes of Extension without competent county agents and effective local organization through which the people in the counties can be brought into participation in the educational program of Extension. The next chapter therefore turns to the county organization.

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# EXTENSION ORGANIZATION AT THE GRASS ROOTS

THE previous chapters have given a bird's-eye view of the inception, the history, and the federal and state organization of the Extension Service in the United States. The purpose of this organizational structure is to implement the objectives of Extension in the local counties and communities, on the farms and in the homes. The county, therefore, is the crucial unit in Extension work. It is in the counties that adult education is carried on and where its teachings are subjected to the acid test of workability.

This chapter is devoted to the organization and operation of Extension in the counties. Its programs will be considered in later chapters.

## *COUNTY EXTENSION ORGANIZATION*

The county work is centered in an adviser to the farmers, usually called a county agent. In about three-fourths of the counties there is also a home adviser, usually known as a home demonstration agent. Several hundred counties also have agents for boys' and girls' club work, but usually this activity is an added responsibility of the adult workers. This is the usual setup. Many of the larger and more prosperous counties have additional agents for one to all of the three major areas of work.

### *State Differences Many*

The average county in the United States has close to 2,000 farms, but many agricultural counties have more—5,000 and upwards is not at all unusual. It is obvious that with a potential constituency of this size, not to mention the rural non-farm population, which is seeking more and more service from Extension, an effective program depends upon sound organization. At this

point the diversities among the states, and even among counties within a single state, emerge. There is no single pattern of county Extension organization in the United States. It would be very unfortunate if there were. Among the states the differences are related to variations in the laws which approved state cooperation and to varying administrative procedures, which in turn express somewhat differing philosophies of Extension. Among counties and within the limitations set by the state laws, individual ideas of agents or local people, varying social and economic conditions such as population density, and sometimes the ingenuity, originality, or administrative ability of the agent are some of the factors accounting for the differences.[1] It is possible, therefore, to describe the chief county organizational patterns only in general terms, with full recognition of the fact that there would be diversities if the description were applied to any given county.

### *County Councils Help Agents*

One procedure is for the agents to work with a County Council, often made up of representatives from each of the organized farm groups in the county, such as the dairy, fruit, cotton, tobacco, vegetable, or other commodity groups, and occasionally also of general farm organizations.

The weaknesses of this form of organization are several: It leaves out of organizational participation those who are only slightly or not at all concerned with specialized commodities. Any county has needs far broader than those of a commodity group, and this type of organization makes it difficult to meet such needs. Neither does it fit the needs of the home demonstration or 4–H areas of Extension. A family unit approach is thus made all but impossible, and even the less inclusive integration of the various programs is made difficult. A county agricultural agent will of course work with all commodity-producer groups, but to base the county organization upon such groups does not produce the best results.

Again, the county organization may be based on clubs definitely organized by, and closely related to, Extension. This plan, while still frequently employed by home demonstration and 4–H agents,

[1] In one state two sharply contrasting methods of county organization and operation have grown up. Recently, at the state's request, its Extension Service and the federal office cooperated in a study to determine which form procured the better results.

is being increasingly supplemented by other methods of organization. Where county councils are organized on this plan, they are based on representation from these clubs. Such an organizational pattern has definite advantages. It establishes local units in the communities reached. It promotes unity of feeling and purpose, develops leadership among the members, and provides a social outlet for them. On the other hand, it often tends to be limited to one group of people, educational purposes may become subordinated to social, and continuous organizational assistance is required from the agents.

In other cases, this county council may be made up of representatives of each recognized community in the county, with or without recognition of commodity or other groups. These representatives may be chosen either by the people in the community who participate in Extension programs, whether formally organized or not, or by the local leaders in the community, who frequently comprise a local Extension council. In areas where the township form of local government is important, some counties secure the equivalent of a county council by electing at the annual town meeting from two to four persons as the town's representatives for Extension Service. Again, such persons may be appointed by the Board of Selectmen (town council) of each town in the county. Quite frequently such a council selects an executive committee which meets monthly with the agent and in effect acts as his board of directors.

As a general rule, this kind of approach is most effective in places not already well organized, since it considers the entire community and all its needs. Functional committees can give attention to various community needs, such as education, religion, marketing, roads, extension. This "whole-community" organization plan is not easy to develop, but it has been done. It has the advantage of being all-inclusive.[2] However, if strong community organization already exists, successful coordination usually comes only through a community or even a county council.

In some counties where the Extension work is well integrated and the approach is on the farm and community basis, such a

[2] Cf. Mary Mims, *The Awakening Community* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932).

E. J. Niederfrank, *Main Types of County Extension Organization*, USDA Extension Service Circular No. 448 (March, 1948).

Edmund deS. Brunner, *Community Organization and Adult Education* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942).

county council is made up of both men and women who consider the total program. This is a highly desirable procedure. In the average case a county council concerned with the total Extension program makes for highly successful work. Details with respect to any one division of Extension can always be handled by committees. Sometimes, especially in the South, representatives from business circles, such as bankers' associations, chambers of commerce, and other merchants' organizations, having interests in agricultural and rural development, share in the organization of the county council. This stems from the early days when Dr. Knapp secured the cooperation and often the contributions of such groups to help in his demonstration program.

Meeting with the council, the county agent obtains help in formulating the extension program. He can discuss the county extension budget, and ways and means of securing active support and cooperation from local people. Besides getting assistance on administrative and financial problems, the county agent also relies to a great extent on the cooperation of members of the council to help locate local demonstrators, to promote local extension activities, and to develop local leadership. To the county council the county agent also reports the results of work accomplished in the county, and encourages the council's suggestions and recommendations pertaining to policies.

Variations of the county council plan involve what are known as county advisory boards, boards of agriculture, extension associations, and agricultural committees. These have varying degrees of responsibility and power, but their essential purpose is to provide a direct channel of communication between the professional staff of the Extension Service in the county and their constituents.

### *Direct Sponsor Type of Organization: The Farm Bureau*

In some cases the local organization of Extension is rooted in a local sponsoring organization. In a few states, including some of those agriculturally most important, this local organization is the county Farm Bureau. Originally this organization was promoted by the state colleges of agriculture, and to some extent by the Department of Agriculture, to give the county agent the feeling of a local organization through which to carry his program to the rural people. In such cases the bureau sponsored Extension work in its county, requested county tax funds, and in some states pro-

vided the local share of the financing through memberships and contributions.[3] In due time comparable Home Bureaus were organized for women's work. The bureau organization was designed to blanket each county.

## *UNIT OF ORGANIZATION*

Two terms have been used in describing the units of local organization within a county: community and township. The latter, of course, is a minor civil division, a legal entity. There is often debate as to which type of organization is more effective for the purposes of Extension. Township boundaries are definite, clear-cut. The Extension staff know into what unit each home fits. In any emergency program, as in a war, when every home is to be reached, this form of local organization makes it easy to include everyone. In contrast, the community and the neighborhoods within it cannot be automatically delimited by studying lines on a map. Rather they must be discovered by questioning the people themselves. Moreover, even when community boundaries are fixed, there is no certainty that they are set for all time. They change as conditions change.

By the same token, community and neighborhood boundaries are more valuable than legal boundaries because they indicate the areas within which the people habitually associate in their day-to-day contacts. Such an integrating factor as the rural high school, especially if consolidated, exercises strong influence in developing social cohesiveness among a group of people. The boundaries of the areas within which the people recognize that one or more common interests or factors bind them together have no necessary relation to legal boundaries. They may or may not coincide with them. If they do, as in parts of New England where the township is still a functioning social unit, Extension can safely organize its local units on a township basis. Under such conditions township organization works. If they do not, the use of legal units as units of social organization by any agency imposes a handicap upon the most effective operation of the agency. The strength of the handicap will be roughly proportional to the degree of divergence between the legal and the socially determined boundaries.

[3] The relationship of the Extension Service and the Farm Bureau in its broader aspects will be discussed in a later chapter.

*Courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture*

Orleans County rural policy committee meets to discuss policies in guiding veterans who want to buy farms
(County Agent Roger Whitcomb, presiding)

The best unit for the local organization of Extension, or any other agency with field contacts, is that which conforms as closely as possible with the normal associational patterns of the people concerned.

### *Determining Boundaries*

The processes of determining the boundaries of a social community are not very complicated. Rural sociologists long ago worked out methods of doing this. Moreover, local people are quite cognizant of them. When the United States Department of Agriculture needed to delimit community boundaries in a land use planning program in the 1930's, it found that county committees could do this quite satisfactorily. Research showed that the margin of error between the determination of boundaries by the people concerned and by careful sociological research was relatively small—less than 10 per cent on the average.

Such local groupings are recognized in almost all cultures, even among relatively primitive peoples. They are quite easy to determine in the village economy which characterizes much of the Orient, many of the Pacific islands, and other areas. Their boundaries are defined by local people in varying ways. A man in a remote mountain area in a Southern state defined his neighborhood as "as far as a man is heard when he hollers." An eastern European peasant defined the size of his community as "as far as a man or woman can be talked about" and he knew how far that was. Whatever the area and however locally defined and understood, a growing amount of experience in the United States testifies to the effectiveness of organizing the educational program of Extension on a community basis.

### *Importance of Local Units*

The importance of effective local units of organization becomes clearer when the work of the county agents is considered. Extension programs and program planning will be discussed in some detail in later chapters, but at this point it is necessary to consider program briefly from the point of view of organization.

A large amount of the earlier work of the agricultural agents, based as so much of it was on demonstrations, was done on individual farms. Such direct teaching of the individual farmer, possibly with a few neighbors in addition, was highly effective. The theory was that as the results of the demonstration became

visible in fields and in orchards, others would adopt similar methods.

Obviously, however, as Extension proved itself to the general run of farmers, this method became inadequate, because it was impossible to reach by a tutorial program the 2,000 farms of an average county. Moreover, it was a method which applied only to technical phases of agriculture and home economics. As the Extension program expanded and agents were called upon to teach about marketing, cooperatives, the whys and wherefores, pros and cons, of some of the depression-born economic programs to support agriculture, and similar subjects, the group method of teaching had to be resorted to. The expansion in the mileage of hard-surfaced farm-to-market roads and in the use of the automobile of course facilitated this method.

When groups are used in any program, in the nature of the case there is social interaction and social organization. The latter can be left to chance or the agents can use "hunches." Guesses of agents who know their counties well are usually quite accurate, but it takes time to learn to know a county. In these days of enlarging staffs, of increased turnover among agents, and of an expanding field of subject matter that must needs be brought to the people, more definite organization procedures are called for. Otherwise the effectiveness of Extension as a rural adult educational agency is reduced, especially when staff personnel changes.

All this is not to say that there should be in every county a separate organization through which alone Extension should function. Whether or not there should be such an organization depends on the local situation within the county. In some counties there is little social organization and perhaps many unmet needs recognized by the people themselves. Here Extension may very well set up an organization. Other counties, usually more advantaged than the average, may have a full complement of organizations. In such a case Extension work may be most successful if major emphasis is put on cooperating with and working through the local agencies with a minimum of its own organization.[4]

[4] This proved to be the case in Michigan. Two otherwise quite similar counties in one of which Extension had set up its own organization and in the other of which it worked largely through other agencies were compared. Measured by the tests devised, the latter was the more effective. Cf. Hoffer, Charles R., *Social Organization in Relation to Extension Service in Eaton County, Michigan.* Michigan State College Agricultural Experiment Station, August, 1946

It was quite clear from the reports of area committees at the 1944 conference on Extension in war-torn countries that the simpler the social situation, the broader the program of Extension would have to be.[5] This is true even in North America. Speaking to a seminar at Columbia University in 1949, an official in the Extension Service of a relatively poor and densely populated area declared that health was the Number 1 problem of his organization.

### *SPECIAL-INTEREST GROUPS*

It must not be supposed that organization of an all-inclusive nature, whether on a community or a township basis, will solve all problems. In many counties, especially large ones with diversified agriculture, special-interest groups dealing with some one commodity are organized. A few large counties employ agents who work full time with the producers of a single product—poultrymen, dairymen, orchardists, and the like. This approach naturally is more frequently used in agriculture than in home economics, though both employ it. In home economics, however, some counties with a number of persons on the staff assign each worker a separate area of the county.

### *ORGANIZATION OF HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK*

Much of the foregoing has been written in general terms and applies to all aspects of Extension work, but a few words should be said especially about activities with farm women.

Partly because of the nature of the program, partly for other reasons, the work in home economics Extension has from the outset been organized largely on a neighborhood or community basis, usually in clubs of from twelve to twenty-five women. Each such group elects the usual officers and plans its own program. Refreshments and a social hour are a usual feature of club meetings, in addition to the demonstration or other educational program.

The county Home Demonstration Council is the next unit of

[5] Cf. *Conference Report on the Contribution of Extension Methods and Techniques Toward the Rehabilitation of War-Torn Countries* (Washington, D. C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1945).

home demonstration organization. When three or more communities have well-established local home demonstration clubs, a county demonstration council may be organized, made up of representatives from the local clubs. It has an executive committee which consists of the officers and the past president of the council, with the home demonstration agent serving as an adviser. There is a board of directors also, made up of three elected county officers and the retiring president of the county council, the president and secretary of all member clubs, and the home demonstration agent. This board may meet monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly, according to agreement. One of its main functions is to advise the home demonstration agent in shaping the county program and plans.

Finally there is usually a state council of home demonstration clubs. In Arkansas, for instance, the state council is made up of seventy-eight county home demonstration councils. It has its own officers, executive committee, and board of directors. In Georgia, on the other hand, the state council is made up of representatives, officers, and project chairmen of each council. The state council usually holds its annual meeting during the State Farm and Home Week. The state council appoints an executive committee, which holds semi-annual meetings at the state university. From this committee, suggestions for the work of the succeeding year are sent to all county councils.

### *BOYS' AND GIRLS' CLUB ORGANIZATION*

In addition to adult work, the Extension Service has a considerable program of boys' and girls' club work, which now embraces about 1¾ million boys and girls a year. Like so much of Extension work, these clubs were given their start by Dr. Knapp. The program, like that of the other areas of Extension operation, will be discussed later. In this chapter only the organizational aspect is discussed. It is sufficient for the moment to say that the name, 4–H club, summarizes the program. The H's stand for head, heart, hands, and health.

Organizationally the principles and procedures already discussed in general apply also to the 4–H club. Since the largest number of members are between 10 and 14 or 15 years of age, the club is necessarily a locality group, usually on a neighborhood basis. In several hundred counties 4–H club agents devote full

time to this work. Elsewhere it is the responsibility of the agricultural and home demonstration agents, who give close to one-third of their time to it. Parental permission is required for a boy or girl to join the club. No club is organized unless a competent local leader, who proves himself to the community, can be found. He is often given the help of a committee. There is also usually a county 4–H club council. As is the case in the other areas of Extension work, there are also one or more persons on the state staff who advise on the 4–H program and extend various kinds of help, including leader training, to the counties.

In the years before World War II some states began to develop Extension programs for older rural youth. Interfered with by the war, the total enrollment never got beyond around 100,000. It is interesting to note that the older rural youth were not interested in organization below the community level (i.e., as neighborhoods), that from the start they developed county-wide activities, and that, perhaps to an even greater extent than in the home economics work, rural non-farm members were in their clubs. Such developments clearly spring from the experiences of these youth. The automobile has freed them from dependence upon the local neighborhood. Especially those who have gone to high school have come to know and have formed friendships with non-farm young people. The line on the map dividing the incorporated village or country town from the open country township means nothing to them. Their social life fits itself to the realities of the social situation which developments in communication, education, and technology have brought about in rural America.

## *INTEGRATION OF PROGRAMS*

The description of county Extension organization in this chapter has been in general terms because of the variations in procedure employed all over the nation. Although the main patterns are indicated, they are not to be considered the last word. Extension has unsolved problems even in organization.

One of these is better integration of the three major programs. In many counties this is done very well, with full recognition of the farm family as a unit which the various programs must take into account. The agents know enough about one another's work to be able to function in place of a colleague on simple problems.

In other counties, however, there are three separate programs in operation, related only because those responsible for them share the same post-office address. Sometimes this occurs as a result of an inordinate pressure of work on a too small staff. It is also sometimes the result of an organization at the state level so beautifully set forth on a chart that no interaction, exchange of information, or integration is provided for among the three coordinate departments of the Service, and none takes place.

Theoretically each of the three main areas of the Extension Service in any county should contribute to the others, especially among the farm population. The contact of any one of them with a farm should produce contacts for the other two, assuming a complete family lives on the farm. Similarly, as individuals mature, membership in a 4-H club should lead to membership in adult Extension groups by way of an older rural youth organization. Actually this happens in hundreds of counties. But at the other extreme there are some counties where it does not, where there is a relatively small overlap in family names recorded in the records of the agricultural, home economics, and 4-H club agents. Herein lies one important problem of Extension organization not yet solved everywhere.

## *COUNTY AGENT UNIQUE*

One additional consideration must be set forth. The county agent is unique among educators in that he has both administrative and educational responsibilities. Contrast him with the county superintendent of schools, who is concerned with the county school budget, selection of teachers, enforcement of state board of education policies, and the like. He is of course interested in education. He may participate with his teachers in a curriculum revision project. But he does not teach any more than his teachers administer, though they may share democratically in administrative decisions.

The county agent also has to formulate his budget and secure local and state approval for it. In an average case, he has few persons to employ; but he not only must deal with his county council or equivalent organization but must administer and train a staff of local volunteer leaders, often several hundred in number, without whose help the Extension program would be sharply restricted in scope. Beyond these duties he is pre-eminently a

teacher of adults on a great and growing variety of subjects,[6] and this instruction has to be imparted under a large variety of circumstances. Moreover, the agent must often write his own textbook, so to speak, if he needs to send word out quickly to all persons concerned about some new development. The successful agent, then, requires an above-average number of abilities if he is to measure up to his or her job. His task would be impossible without the supporting structure that has been built up, on which the agent can depend for help when needed. The next chapter considers these aids to the local agents, most of them available at the state college of agriculture.

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Works, George A. and Morgan, Barton. *The Land-Grant Colleges.* Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1939.

[6] Not long ago, when one of the authors was sitting in a county agent's office, there were seven telephone calls in one half hour, each raising a question that required knowledge and the ability to teach in order to answer. How did one go about spraying for a certain insect pest? How did the federal price support program operate with respect to a commodity the questioner produced? Were fish heads good fertilizer and if so, were fresh or dried ones better? How were they used? And so on. Each time a patient, clear answer was forthcoming. Once the agent consulted a technical book on a stand beside his desk before answering.

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# THE SUPPORTING STRUCTURE OF THE EXTENSION SERVICE

It is already clear that the county workers as educators must be "generalists" rather than specialists. The potential range of subject matter with which they must deal in the physical sciences as related to agriculture and home economics is very great. To this are now being added quite rapidly subjects which lie within the field of the social sciences. The task would be impossible were it not for two considerations. The first of these is that, as in so much of adult education, the area of instruction is often one with which those taught have practical daily experience. The Extension worker draws out this experience and builds it into his materials. Extension is a cooperative process down to the smallest unit of operation.

## *UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LOCAL EXTENSION*

The second consideration lies in the strong supports at federal and especially state levels upon which the county worker can rely. The United States Department of Agriculture has of course important action and regulatory responsibilities, but coordinate with these activities are those of research, planning, and education. The Extension Service is the main educational arm of the Department. A stated objective of the Department is to "help the farmer, primarily in solving his problems of production, of marketing, of farm organization, of land tenure, and of land utilization."[1] In its early years, the Department's research was mainly concerned with farm technology.

[1] USDA, *The United States Department of Agriculture. Its Structure and Functions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 88 (Washington, D. C.: 1940), p. 3.

Research in the different fields of agricultural science and technology brought answers to the problems of the farmers, who benefited by this knowledge and increased their productivity. Eventually, it became apparent that the power to produce was not the sole need. Merely to provide the scientific basis for efficient production was not enough. Agricultural production and farm management involved more than application of farm technology. There were other important considerations into which the farmers had to look if proper solutions to their problems were to be obtained. While the Department continued to maintain and expand its technological research, farm people together with the research workers soon began to see the necessity of taking up a new approach to agricultural planning and development.

Only recently have farm people and the research workers in the Department of Agriculture begun to realize the importance of proper soil conservation, land utilization, and marketing. Also more attention has recently been given to the integration of agricultural science and technology with the cultural and socio-psychological elements of the various areas of human association. Not only is a union of the social and biological sciences in agriculture a natural consequence of this new idea, but it is a logical step toward achieving a better and more harmonious working relationship between the Department of Agriculture and the farm people. Side by side with the work in farm technology, the Department of Agriculture today projects its activities into such new fields of rural life as migration trends, rural poverty, improper farming systems, harmful tenure relationships, property rights in land, mortgage debt, and land taxation, and more recently, into the fields of nutrition, housing, health, community organization, and rural leadership. By such activities it seeks to obtain better adjustments in rural institutions and organizations, and to improve local situations conducive to effective group planning and group action.

Working side by side with the Extension Service are two leading agricultural institutions, namely the State Agricultural Colleges and the Agricultural Experiment Stations located at and a part of each college. These institutions, working in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, try to bridge the gap between agricultural scientists and farm people. Serving in this capacity, the Extension Service, according to Director M. L. Wilson, "was broadly conceived as an instrument primarily

but not wholly of adult education through which, by means of the education process, all rural people would be given the opportunity of learning the results of scientific research and scientific thinking as related to agriculture, and out of this would grow a rural civilization based upon scientific knowledge—a civilization in which rural people would have a way of living which would give opportunity for individual and group realization of the best values inherent within them."[2] Extension work, so conceived and administered, is in brief "extending science to farming."

## *EXTENSION SUPPORT FROM RESEARCH*

Without the research work of the United States Department of Agriculture and of the experiment stations there could be little or no Extension. Cut off from the reservoir of scientific inquiries and investigation, Extension workers would soon have little left to "extend."

The Department itself has one of the foremost research stations in the world at Beltsville, Maryland, and regional laboratories elsewhere. These specialize in problems of national or regional concern, often in cooperation with the state college research workers. Work at the colleges, like that of the Extension Service, is cooperative. As noted in Chapter 1, this cooperation was begun in 1887 with the passage of the Hatch Act. It was extended by the Adams Act of 1906, under the provisions of which the total appropriations for each state from federal sources reached $30,000 a year by 1909. In 1925 the Purnell Act further increased these funds and provided for research in marketing, rural sociology, and home economics. By 1930 a grand total of $90,000 a year of federal funds became available to each state. The Bankhead-Jones Act of 1935 had two features worthy of note. First, the act took the initial step to emphasize research relating to the conservation, development, and use of land and water resources for agricultural purposes. Second, the act provided a matching system under which no payment from the Federal Treasury could be made in excess of the amount appropriated by the states and the territories. Thus, even before the passage of the Research and Marketing Act in 1946, about $25,000,000 a year was being

[2] M. L. Wilson, *Cultural Approach in Extension Work*, USDA Extension Service Circular No. 332 (May, 1940), p. 2.

spent in the states and territories on research, of which the federal government furnished less than one-third.

Obviously a vast amount of new knowledge and more practical applications of old knowledge was developed as a result of this work. The publications resulting from it in any one year exceed 1,000 bulletins and 2,000 articles, covering the whole vast range of topics related to agriculture, home economics, and rural life. All of this knowledge is available as source material to the county agent. Obviously much of it does not apply to any given county. Research on sugar cane would not interest most states. However, even the amount which does apply to any given situation is considerable. With their other responsibilities, local agents cannot keep up with all of it and translate it into teachable form for their purposes.

## *THE EXTENSION SPECIALIST*

There thus came into existence, almost with the inception of the Extension Service, the position of "specialist." Each such person deals with a single area of subject matter, or possibly a few closely related areas. An official circular speaks of them as follows:

> A fundamental principle underlying extension work is that the agricultural college and experiment station and the United States Department of Agriculture have something to extend. If this principle is correct it then makes necessary the employment of subject-matter specialists who shall represent the subject-matter departments of our colleges and stations and the United States Department of Agriculture and who shall assist the county agents in organizing and forwarding their subject-matter programs. These specialists are absolutely necessary to the greatest success of county agent work, and to all cooperative extension work.[3]

Thus specialists are the professional liaison between the county agents, the agricultural colleges, the experiment stations, and the United States Department of Agriculture. They are analysts and interpreters of scientific knowledge and factual information. They are the connecting link between research and practice. They are dispensers of subject-matter information in their own fields, simplifying and clarifying this information so as to enable the

[3] T. Roy Reid and M. C. Wilson, "Functions and Activities of State Extension Specialists" (USDA Extension Service Circular 189, September, 1933), p. 3.

people to understand and apply it to their everyday affairs, whether on the farm, in the home, or in marketing procedures or organization of the community for some desired end.

*Preparing Teaching Materials*

This part of their work the specialists perform by presenting the research results they deem of value to the local people in simply worded bulletins, leaflets, and circulars. To assist them in this work they can call upon the Extension editor. Recently the federal Extension Service has increased its assistance to the states by setting up a readability laboratory in its Division of Field Studies and Training. Using techniques developed elsewhere,[4] it measures the level of difficulty in any given piece of writing. If the educational status of the audience is known (this is determined by the median number of years of schooling completed by adults as given in the Census), the laboratory can determine whether or not the manuscript submitted is too difficult for the average reader to whom it is addressed. All this indicates that the specialist is an interpreter, even a popularizer, of scientific findings to facilitate their practical application.

*Specialists Help Agents*

But this in only part of the function of specialists. They are vitally related to county agents, their first resource on any problems on which additional information may be needed. They are expected to bring new information, pertinent in given county situations, to the attention of the agents and of fellow members of the state staff who may be concerned.

It is also the practice in most states for each specialist to outline a state-wide program in his or her subject-matter field. In effect this is a brief course which is made available to the counties. If any county feels the need of this material, the specialist assists the agent concerned in developing it in terms of the needs and interests of the local people, and in the effective use of those teaching methods best adapted to the subject matter involved. In counties where some of the burden of instruction is carried by local leaders, the specialist assists in training these leaders and is responsible for preparing teaching materials for these leaders. These do not stop

[4] Largely in the Readibility Laboratory at Teachers College, Columbia University (directed by Lyman Bryson), by Irving Lorge and Rudolph Flesch.

at the preparation of bulletins and circulars. They involve also such things as form letters, filmstrips, motion pictures, slides, exhibits, and, in appropriate subjects, the planning of demonstrations. Once under way in a state, such a program is also usually supported by articles for local newspapers and by radio broadcasts.

Throughout any such process, one requirement for the specialist is to conduct the leader-training or any direct teaching of the local people in such a way as to strengthen the position of the county worker and enable him or her to meet, better than would otherwise have been possible, subject-matter problems which may arise after the specialist leaves.

There is an increasing feeling that after any major enterprise the specialist should attempt, in cooperation with others, an evaluation of the work in order to discover successful and unsuccessful teaching methods and procedures within his or her area of subject matter so that materials and teaching may constantly be improved.

Several classifications of state specialists' functions have been made by those working with them in the federal office. All are valid for their purposes. One such analysis by T. Roy Reid and M. C. Wilson is cited here, in part because it also indicates the time distribution among the various functions:

A. *Planning functions:* (Consuming one-fourth of the time of all the specialists.)

   1. Program determination.
   2. Project planning.
   3. Maintaining cooperative relations with other organizations.
   4. Determining progress and accomplishment.

B. *Training functions:* (Consuming one-fourth of the time of all the specialists.)

   5. Administrative and supervisory staff.
   6. County extension workers.

C. *Direct teaching functions:* (Consuming one-third to one-half of the time of the specialists.)

   7. State-wide.
   8. County.

D. *Studying extension jobs:* (Consuming less than one-seventh of the time of the specialists.)

9. Making studies to determine more effective methods of conducting projects and to obtain new data and information to be used in their teaching programs.[5]

*Other Extension Relationships*

Besides working with farmers and county agents, the subject-matter specialist has relations with different agencies both inside and outside the state Extension Service.

In the first place, he is directly responsible to the state Extension director for all activities in his specific field. At the end of the year he makes a report to the Extension director, summarizing the progress and achievements of different projects under his supervision.

In the second place, the specialist maintains close contact with the related subject-matter departments in the agricultural college and experiment station of his state. About half the states locate the offices of their specialists in these subject-matter departments rather than with the Extension staff. This procedure has the hearty approval of the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies and Goals of the United States Department of Agriculture and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, which, reporting late in 1948, recommended:

> . . . Each subject-matter program of the three should be combined into one department. Though other factors have to be considered, subject-matter departments can also be strengthened by housing workers in each subject-matter field together, and by appropriate cooperation in publications, in field testing of experimental findings, and in an occasional exchange of responsibilities.

In the third place, the work of the specialist is closely related to that of supervisors. Familiarity with the work of supervisors enables the specialist to discuss intelligently the total Extension program operating in the county. The efficient specialist keeps the supervisors informed of the specific projects undertaken in a given locality in order that each supervisor may bring his influence to bear on the adoption and spread of certain recommended practices. At the suggestion of the administrator, the supervisor is often able to assist a group of specialists to develop mutual activities which bring more desirable results for the farmers. In the interest of maintaining a well-balanced program

[5] Reid and Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

and of attaining the most desirable objectives, the relationship between subject-matter specialists and extension supervisors is inseparable.

The fourth vital relationship of the specialist is with the United States Department of Agriculture. From its experimental and research work, already mentioned, a stream of scientific information regarding facts about scientific agriculture and the principles involved in their application is kept in constant circulation. Specialists must obviously have access to this rich storage of scientific knowledge if their work in the field is to be profitable.

Besides the foregoing official connections which specialists preserve, they must also maintain relations with certain commercial representatives, such as processors, wholesale dealers, and commercial field men, and with many other special-interest groups, such as farmers' cooperatives.

### *Federal Staff Specialists*

The federal Extension office has a small specialist staff numbering not quite forty persons, which brings to the attention of state workers the results of federal research in the various subject-matter areas.

These federal specialists make periodic visits to the states, where they gather information about new ideas and new activities and pass them on to other states. They also serve as clearinghouses of information between states and assist state specialists with their programs and problems. Federal specialists are "seeing eyes," so to speak, to help state specialists and county workers to view the total picture of Extension work and to obtain a correct perspective regarding their individual contributions toward national accomplishments.

Federal specialists have neither administrative nor supervisory functions over the states. However, as specified in the Smith-Lever Act, the land-grant colleges are required to submit their plans of extension work to the federal Extension Service at the beginning of each fiscal year for approval. These plans are examined by the federal Extension specialists, who add whatever suggestions and recommendations they deem necessary. After the plans are approved by the federal Director of Extension they are returned to the states. Occasionally state plans are found unsatisfactory. The matter is then threshed out through the office of the federal Extension Director and that of the state

Extension Director until an amicable understanding is reached. To facilitate the cooperative machinery of the Extension Service, federal Extension specialists provide the state Extension specialists with an outline and suggestions for preparing their annual plans of work. This outline contains such items as situations and trends; adjustments, remedies, or changes recommended: objectives, methods, results; numerical goals for the year; participation; cooperation; extension literature and illustrative materials; calendar work; outline map of states showing where work is to be conducted; and projection of plans through the first half of the calendar year.

*The Specialist Function and Problems*

Agricultural and home economics extension in the United States is so organized that every classification of worker is an integral part of the whole structure. The Extension Service is a team, each member indispensable. This is clearly true of the specialist. Few if any county workers would have time to keep abreast of the increasing volume of research in all pertinent areas of subject matter and make the necessary applications to his or her county. The specialist function is clearly recognized and established in all states. Throughout the history of Extension, the ratio of specialists to county workers has been maintained, with minor variations, at slightly less than one to five. This ratio has varied sharply among the states from as much as one to three in one case to as few as one to ten or twelve in others. Factors which account for these variations are differences among the states in economic status, in ideas about the specialist functions, and in number of crops grown, but all states recognize the specialist functions as a necessary part of Extension.

However, no aspect of Extension work raises more problems. Unless the specialist is far more competent in his subject than the agents he is unqualified for his job. But in addition he must be an analyst, interpreter, and popularizer of the subject matter he handles. If he is not an educator, he is not of maximum usefulness in Extension. This calls for an additional type of competency not demanded of the research worker in the same field, yet the specialist must be qualified to meet the researcher on equal terms.

This situation has not always been sufficiently recognized by Extension administrators. In the earlier years of the work, a

A farmer and his son talk over with county agent plans for a new silo (Arkansas)

*Pictures by courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture*

The Negro county agent visits a Negro farmer and his wife on their farm (Giles County, Tennessee)

county agent with a flair for or special interest or competency in some area was often transferred to the state office as a specialist. In 1933 one-third of the specialists were former county agents. Nor has this practice ceased. Through practical experience, as well as special attention to the subject, many such persons have proved well qualified to serve as specialists. On the other hand, many of them were and are not as well prepared for their specialist work as present-day conditions demand.

In the early days of Extension, the body of knowledge available in any given area was significantly smaller than it is today. The growing roster of specialist titles itself shows this very clearly. Thirty years ago, for instance, almost the only specialists listed in women's work were in the general categories of home economics or home management. Today there are specialists in nutrition, clothing, food preservation, interior decoration, and so on. Other illustrations could be given. These expanding categories bear witness to the expanding program of Extension over the years, the widening interests of the people whom Extension serves, the growing and increasingly specialized body of knowledge which has been produced by the experiment stations and needs to be turned into teachable materials. At the same time the educational level in rural America has been steadily rising, with the result that the help demanded from Extension specialists must be on a higher level than formerly.

These developments are not sufficiently recognized. As recently as 1933 a study by the Division of Field Studies and Training of the federal Extension office showed that seven out of ten specialists and nine out of ten directors regarded technical training equivalent to a four-year college course as the chief requirement for a successful agricultural specialist. Only one specialist in six and one director in thirteen looked on graduate work as essential, though many considered it desirable. Among other things, this situation has militated against giving academic status to Extension specialists or other workers, a step taken in a few states and desired by the workers in some others for a variety of reasons beyond the scope of this chapter. However, in 1938 almost one-tenth of the agricultural specialists had Doctor's degrees and slightly over one-third, Master's. Less than 1 per cent of the home economics specialists had Doctor's degrees but over one-half had Master's.

*Limitations of Specialist Work*

The above considerations lie in the realms of job classification and administrative policy. There are other unsolved problems inherent in the specialist function itself. Some of these were dealt with in a recent study by the Joint Committee of the United States Department of Agriculture and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, of which the senior author of the present volume was a member. This report said:

> The farmer, for instance, has a deep interest in what he is told by the extension specialists in agronomy, horticulture, animal husbandry, farm management, and others. He wants to profit from what he hears. But the more specialists there are to serve him, the more complicated becomes the job of fitting together their varied recommendations into a workable whole suited to his soil, his financial situation, his preferences and abilities, his family needs, his market outlets, and all other significant factors bearing upon the most practical course to follow.
>
> There are certain aspects of extension procedures which tend to perpetuate the specialized approach. Prominent among these is the development of extension programs in terms of specific "projects" or lines of educational activity. Annual plans of work submitted by the counties historically have included projects in specific fields such as dairy-herd improvement, poultry culling, home gardening, seed improvement, food preservation, clothing, and the like. It is assumed that each of these will contribute to the basic objective of extension work. This assumption is rarely questioned and less often examined in the light of changing economic and social conditions. This situation places a premium upon each specialist securing a maximum following in the counties which will use his materials and request his technical services.
>
> Unfortunately this procedure is reinforced by the tendency of some administrators to gauge the effectiveness of individual specialists on their staffs by the demands for their services and by the number of changed practices reported each year in the various specialists' particular fields of interest.
>
> Further, in a small but increasing number of counties with powerful and influential groups of producers of some one commodity, county specialists are being added to the staff. The county agent then becomes more of an administrator and less of an educator.
>
> This committee would point out that farm life itself is not lived in segments or projects. It is lived as a whole. The operator faces a multitude of problems of which production is one, marketing another, conservation of soil resources another, and so on. The end objective of solving all these problems is a better life for the farm family and

the insurance of an adequate supply of agricultural products for the general public.[6]

Many typical instances could be cited to illustrate the complicated and sometimes conflicting situations created by the over-eagerness of specialists to urge changed practices on the operators and their families. The present authors recall a relatively small family farm. Its chief sources of income were poultry and dairying. The operator was a farm organization officer and readily secured the help of both the poultry and the dairy specialist from the state college. Each gave excellent technical advice but neither took into consideration the cost of carrying out this advice in terms of the unencumbered capital assets of this mortgaged farm, its cash position, or the quality of its soil. Nor did either of them consider his own advice with reference to the other's suggestions, their cost in money and time, or other needs of the farm and home. This farmer was saved from bankruptcy only because his wife went back to her former profession to help support the family.

### *Specialists and the Farm Family Unit Plan*

Happily some states recognize this problem. There have been interesting experiments to discover methods of conducting Extension work in terms of the totality of farm and home problems, rather than by particularized projects unrelated to one another or to the total situation. Essentially the questions have been: "Given this farm, this home and this family, what are the best things to do and in what priority? What can each specialist contribute to the program for this farm and home?" Training schools for both agents and specialists along these lines have been held in some states, using specific farms for demonstration purposes. This procedure is variously called "balanced farming" and "family farm unit plan." Evidence already available shows that with such methods more improved practices are adopted than under conventional procedures.

Viewing such facts, the committee mentioned above stated its conviction:

> *This committee believes that with the varied expansion of scientific knowledge, and the desirability in many areas of some diversification, the average farm family needs the help of more generalists rather than*

[6] *Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals.* U. S. Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, August, 1948), pp. 38–39.

*of more specialists. They need a competent interpreter and integrator of usable facts.*

This procedure in no way minimizes the function of the specialist. Rather it enhances it, since too frequently so-called improved practices are abandoned because they prove impractical in the total family situation. While the unified approach may be incompatible with certain types of projects, it offers the specialist a new and apparently surer approach. Instead of promoting his specialty he has a place with others in helping the farm family do *what it has to do anyhow,* namely, integrate its life and operations into a cohesive day-by-day existence. What farmers think of this plan is shown by the fact that in one state where it has been tried some counties have added an additional agent, at the request and expense of those who wish to cooperate, to work out a balanced farm and home plan for each cooperator. This is a return on a much higher level of operation to the method of teaching through farm and home visits employed so generally in the early days of Extension.

This plan should also provide the specialist with more time to keep up with his specialty and to improve the materials he sends the agents and the teaching methods to be employed with them. In 1933 one agent in six criticized the weakness of specialists at these points, charging they gave them "no help" in the county situations.

*Specialists and the Cultural Environment*

Another problem inherent in the specialist function is that since the specialist knows the answer he may become impatient with anything existing in the culture which blocks the acceptance of that answer by the people. Elsewhere one of the authors has cited a dramatic instance of cultural resistance to a desirable practice. A few years ago, in a Christian village on a Pacific island which had long been under the American flag, the people were found to be seriously deficient in a food element that the banana would supply. Bananas were indigenous to the soil, but despite the continuous efforts of the public health nurse, the home demonstration agent, and the school, the people absolutely refused to eat them. Finally a doctor high in the public health service was called in. To him a local leader, a high school graduate, explained the situation: "The banana," she said with dignity, "is our cousin and we are not cannibals."

Almost a century after accepting Christianity, a century and a half after its first contacts with Euro-American society, this group remained loyal to an ancient but deep-seated taboo. Without knowledge of the culture, then, we are not qualified to begin work.[7]

It should be noted that the particular problems this chapter has discussed are common to the function of specialism in whatever profession. Specialists in management, in medicine, and in many other professions can be too technical, too rigid, and too neglectful of the cultural values of the people with whom they work. The agricultural commodity specialist is no more likely to be exclusively commodity conscious than the specialist in concrete or plywood.

Moreover, to some degree this is not only inevitable but proper. Without special knowledge and competence an individual is not a specialist. In Extension it is this special knowledge which makes the specialist such an important part of the structure of Extension which supports the county agents. The problem is simply to hold the function to its proper place in the program. Proper training and personal understanding, and vigilance on the part of the specialist will solve most of the problems, to the enduring advantage of Extension.

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## EXTENSION RELATIONSHIPS

IT IS obvious from the discussion thus far that the Extension Service has relationships with many official agencies within and without the United States Department of Agriculture and that these relationships occur in counties and their local communities, in states, and nationally through the federal office. It is equally clear that there has to be a multitude of contacts with non-official agencies. It was inevitable almost from the start that any agency like Extension, with a local office in practically every county, would appear to be a heaven-sent mechanism through which sponsors of a wide variety of programs could reach rural people if its cooperation could be secured.

Very early in the history of Extension, a procedure was set up, which has operated with reasonable effectiveness, with respect to requests for Extension Service cooperation on specific and non-continuous matters, such as assistance in promoting a drive in behalf of some worthy cause, or securing county agent opinion on some national issue. If the effort was nation-wide, the request and its possible implications were considered by the federal office. Should the requested cooperation prove to be desirable and within the law, it was transmitted to the directors of Extension at the state colleges with the approval of the federal office. The state director then decided whether or not to advise the county workers to cooperate.

Far more important, however, are the continuing relationships. It is the purpose of this chapter to describe these as they exist within the Department of Agriculture, with the state colleges, in the counties, and with private or semi-private agencies.

### *EXTENSION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE*

In theory the Extension Service is the educational arm of the Department of Agriculture. For many years, with the exception of

the Forest Service, it was the only agency of the Department with direct field contacts. In 1933 and the following years, however, under the dire needs of the depression, a number of agencies were set up in the Department of Agriculture, the nature of whose responsibilities, under the legislation creating them, required a field organization.

Three of these agencies may be mentioned as illustrative: (1) The Production and Marketing Administration.* This agency has local committeemen and pays a small sum per day for the service they render in connection with the farm details of that program. (2) The Farm Security Administration. This agency was in charge of the far-flung rehabilitation program for those farmers who because of drought or other contingencies could not continue operation without assistance. Farm and home advisers were employed for its clients. Their work involved intensive farmstead advice, education, and supervision, necessary to safeguard the government's rehabilitation loans to these clients. This agency is now known as the Farm Home Administration, and its duties and responsibilities are greatly lessened. (3) When soil conservation districts are formed under the Soil Conservation Act, the Soil Conservation Service furnishes technical service to the farmers in initiating practices that should followed.

Similarly, the Farm Credit and Rural Electrification Administrations have field responsibilities, and for several years the Bureau of Agricultural Economics assisted in a county agricultural planning program.

The issues which arose in some states, and situations with respect to the relationships of these newer agencies with Extension, fell into two categories.

One of these concerned methods of operation within the states. With respect to Extension, the agreement referred to in Chapter 2 had been long in force. The states were accustomed to it and to the provision that any field program of the United States Department of Agriculture, educational in nature, should be cleared through the state college. The state was free to cooperate or not, depending on its analysis of its own needs.

The depression-born agencies had not shared in this tradition. They had a mandate from Congress. They were working under the stress of emergency conditions. Some of their field contacts

* Originally the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

they regarded as "informational" in character rather than educational. Some states, less in need of particular programs than others, were unwilling to cooperate, perhaps failing to realize that the laws under which some of these programs were being conducted, unlike the Smith-Lever Act, gave the Department of Agriculture no option in its administration.

The other group of issues was largely concerned with the status of the agencies involved in their role of social institutions. Some Extension workers feared lest the payment of committee members by the Production and Market Administration might make it difficult for Extension to continue to enlist local volunteer leaders, who have never been compensated, even for travel expenses to training conferences. Judged by the over-all statistics, this fear proved groundless. Again, some Extension Service personnel either did not approve of the intensive attention paid by Farmers' Home advisers to their clients, or feared comparisons unfavorable to their own work, since Extension lacked the means to operate on this household basis. Other minor difficulties arose at times when the employee of some agency, on legitimate business, was asked for and gave advice or instruction in matters normally under Extension purview.

The first group of difficulties were ironed out in a conference of Departmental and state college personnel in 1938, which eventuated in an agreement that, so far as applicable in this postwar situation, is working with reasonable effectiveness. The second group were never as serious as they seemed to individuals momentarily involved in some difficulty. In many states, Extension cooperated from the first with the Production and Marketing Administration, and comparably with the other agencies. The Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals of the United States Department of Agriculture and Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, in its studies in 1947–1948, was able to find only a few areas of difficulty, and these were relatively minor in terms of the total complex situation.

Within the Department of Agriculture, the Director of Extension meets with the heads of the other agencies as a member of the Department's policy and program committee, of which the Secretary of Agriculture is chairman. In addition, there are extended conferences between Extension and other agencies whose activities require the cooperation of Extension in educational work. The

weekly letter of the Director to the states is replete with items relating to the activities of other agencies and their implications for the educational program of Extension.

In order to strengthen the coordination already existing, the Joint Committee, mentioned above, made three recommendations:

(1) As rapidly as funds permit this office and each major research or service agency should jointly arrange for one or more persons whose functions would be to facilitate the flow of agency information to rural people through the Extension Service.
(2) The Director of Extension Work and responsible officers of these agencies should meet at least monthly in order that they may keep informed on developments of mutual concern.
(3) The Extension Service of the Department should provide leadership—but not direction—in the formulation of extension policy in the States.[1]

*Departmental–State Relations*

As is clear from the previous section, almost any important activity of the United States Department of Agriculture has implications for the states, most of which involve Extension, since education about them is needed. The cooperative agreement between the Department and the state colleges has been noted. The Joint Committee, after studying the history and taking cognizance of the difficulties with some of the newer agencies arising in the 1930's, concluded that the 1914 Memorandum of Agreement

is an adequate statement as to the basic partnership or cooperative relationships between the Department and the State colleges in the conduct of cooperative extension work. It is further believed that this memorandum is fundamentally sound. When it is adhered to, all educational programs within the States for which the Department has a responsibility will be carried on through or in cooperation with the State colleges of agriculture.

The Joint Committee also made the interesting point that there will always be areas where the programs of Extension and of

[1] *Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals.* Washington, D. C., August, 1948. U. S. Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1948), Chapter V, "The Extension Service within the U. S. Department of Agriculture," p. 25.

other agencies will border closely on each other, in the field, but that if this were not so it would mean that there were "gaps left unfilled which might be equally troublesome." Coordination is obviously a continuing need, but the Committee believed on the evidence that effective cooperation has brought this about and will continue to do so. To this end it suggested further:

1. To keep mutually informed on new developments quarterly meetings should be held between representatives of the Department and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

3. The Department and the colleges should reach agreements on responsibilities *before* new Department programs are launched which involve education in the States.

4. Department agreements with other State agencies involving education should be worked out in conjunction with the colleges.[2]

## *EXTENSION AND OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES*

Extension is an agency charged with adult education among rural people. It is part of a system of federally subsidized state colleges whose charters specifically do not exclude "liberal" education, though directing emphasis to "useful and practical information with reference to agriculture, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word."

Under a charter of this sort, nothing connected with the fundamental welfare of rural people is foreign to the interests of Extension. Potentially at least, this involves cooperation with many federal agencies.

### *Extension and Public Health Service*

One such area is health. While the program of Extension and its planning will be the subject of discussion later, it is desirable at this point to discuss the cooperation in this area between Extension and the United States Public Health Service, as an illustration of an effective relationship which has benefited the people. In 1943–1944, almost half a million persons were engaged in health projects under Extension, many of them 4–H club boys and girls. In many instances, materials used and/or instruction given were supplied by the nursing personnel of the County Health Units,

[2] *Ibid.*, Chapter III, "Department-College Relationships in Connection with Extension Work," p. 11.

a state supervised public health agency in which the federal government cooperates, under the Federal Security Act, in a manner somewhat similar to federal-state cooperation with respect to Extension.

The federal Extension office has a person who works with the states in assisting educational work designed to teach rural people ways and means of organizing for more effective health care. In this activity there is close and continuing cooperation with the Public Health Service, and joint publications have been issued.

*Extension and Office of Education*

Three years after the Smith-Lever law was enacted, setting up the Cooperative Extension Service, Congress passed a law providing for federal aid to schools on a matching basis, for vocational education in agriculture and home economics, along with several other subjects more definitely applicable to urban schools. About half of the rural high schools have availed themselves of the benefits of this so-called Smith-Hughes Act. There were therefore set up, under the law of the land, two educational agencies dealing with the same subject matter, the one operated under the administration of the state colleges of agriculture, the other under state boards of education.

While the larger share of the work of Extension is with adults, it is concerned with children of school age in its 4–H clubs. Comparably, while instruction in the high schools was the primary function of the vocational teachers, they developed formal classes for adults in their subject-matter areas.

It was inevitable that there should be some overlapping of effort between these two tax-supported agencies, and that in specific local situations difficulties should arise. There are those who argue that as an educational agency Extension should be supervised by state educational authorities. Others, without disturbing the work in the schools, would make all vocational teachers members of the staffs of county agricultural or home demonstration agents. This is a fruitless discussion. The reality of the situation prevents either solution, even if one or the other were possible, since both these institutions have the sanction of law.[3] Nor is

[3] An interesting situation existed in one of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations some ten years ago. Half of its states had placed their colleges of agriculture and subsidiary Extension services under the Ministry of Education. In the other half they were under the Ministry of Agriculture. In *all* states there

criticism of the provisions of the law profitable in terms of the operating situation, since this situation will continue save in the unlikely contingency that Congress passes new legislation.

Both the United States Office of Education and the Extension Service have recognized these problems. In 1928 they worked out a Memorandum of Understanding to govern relationships. It is not necessary to give the details of this. It provided, for instance, that Extension workers should not conduct formal classes on an organized basis, comparable to the adult vocational training classes, and sought to solve problems of youth work by assigning different age groups to the different agencies.[4]

The Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals found that difficulties continued to exist in some localities. It is probably correct in its judgment that in the average problem case, personalities rather than principles are involved. It declared that conditions since 1928 had so changed that the Memorandum of Understanding might well be reviewed by the two agencies.

Certainly, over the years and with increasing frequency, a reasonable degree of cooperation has been achieved in most counties. There are instances, particularly in home economics and in smaller counties, where the same individual is employed for half time by each agency. Certainly, too, the total educational job in rural America is so large and so compelling that there is more than enough for all agencies, cooperating closely, to accomplish.

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was agitation to change the procedure from the Ministry then responsible to the other. Had this been done in all cases, the over-all national picture would have been unchanged, though in every state a different Ministry would have had charge of the work.

[4] The problem of literal adherence to such agreements, and the need for statesmanlike cooperation for the best interests of the taxpayers, is illustrated by one instance.

The producers of a highly specialized commodity in one county approached a branch of the state experiment station concerned with this commodity and asked for a course in recent developments. The station director referred them to their county agent but promised to cooperate if requested. The agent happened to be a recognized authority on this crop. The commodity in question requires a very high capital investment. Neither of the teachers of vocational agriculture devoted much time to it but majored on other crops, for one of which in particular the county is famous, and for which the capital investment is small. These teachers, therefore, raised no objections to a series of ten or twelve meetings, of a somewhat formal sort, though the state agreement regarded eight meetings or more as a class and therefore a prerogative of vocational agriculture rather than of agricultural extension. The local persons involved acted wisely for the best interests of the producers. There was no conflict. Technically, however, the agreement had been violated.

## *EXTENSION RELATIONSHIPS IN THE STATES AND COUNTIES*

The cooperative relationships of Extension mean inevitably that any program or activity finds its application in local counties and communities. It means also that most programs, save in times of great national emergency, originate at either one of these two levels. Even for agencies of the Department of Agriculture less closely related to the states the focus of most programs is the local county and the farms and communities within it.

Much space could be taken relating instances of effective co-operation among agencies initiated at the state level. In one state, for instance, where in some of the more remote counties county public health units had not been organized, where doctors were few and there was no medical inspection in the schools, the Extension Service through the Homemakers Clubs and the State Health Department cooperated in a campaign that resulted in nearly 6,000 children being immunized against diphtheria, 3,600 against typhoid, and nearly 1,000 against smallpox. Many defects found in the clinics were corrected. In another state a very complete and continuing program of health education is in progress as this is being written, with Extension cooperating with the State Board of Health through both Homemakers and 4–H Clubs, the responsibility of each agency on a considerable number of activities having been worked out in advance. Similarly there are numerous instances of Extension cooperation with State Library Boards.

But despite a fairly effective coordination federally and many instances of cooperation among state agencies, the individual is often confused. One farm leader reported to a state director of Extension that representatives of seven agencies had visited his farm in a single week, and that this so interested him he had gathered all the literature available. Counting the various programs of the Extension specialists, the topics proposed for Extension discussion groups on public affairs, and the programs of the other agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture, the state college, and other state agencies, he found 301 activities available to him and his family, some of the educational ones conflicting in their recommendations.

In one form or another, this complaint has come from many persons in many states. There has been a substantial increase in

the number of public and private agencies working with rural people. Objectives are similar in some instances, with the result that the people are either conscious of overlapping or, not unnaturally, confused.

Numerous efforts have been made to solve the problem of better local coordination. In a few counties all representatives of federal agencies have, either with formal organization or informally, met together regularly to consider the county and its needs as a whole and plan unitedly to work to meet them. In the County War Boards during World War II, this device was used by the United States Department of Agriculture to carry on its war program. These boards included both farmers and professional staff. A few counties have councils representing all tax-supported personnel, and a very few have experimented with County Councils, which also include representation of citizens and of all general-purpose private organizations.

The Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals accepted the following testimony from the rural sociologists of the Department of Agriculture:

> Experience in widely scattered communities representing all the major farm areas of the country strongly suggest that when agencies utilizing voluntary and democratic procedures find a way to coordinate their programs so that each makes its full and rightful contribution to the solution of rural problems, the following results become evident:
>
> 1. The agencies and local people jointly analyze needs and evolve plans for meeting them. These efforts utilize to the fullest the resources of the people themselves in meeting their needs and bring agency resources to the communities in a coordinated manner.
>
> 2. There is a much higher participation of the local people in agency programs.
>
> 3. Leadership responsibilities of both agency representatives and local people are more clearly defined.
>
> 4. The morale of both agency personnel and local leadership is high.
>
> 5. The people are better served.

The Joint Committee therefore recommended:

> For maximum service to rural people in the counties, all agencies and groups working in the field of agriculture should join together

with farm people to build a county-wide program. Extension should take educational leadership in discussing such an approach.

The visible sign of this coordination is observable in a few counties, where a building has been erected to house all agricultural agencies. In several hundred this coordination has been accomplished without separate construction; but, however accomplished, housing all agricultural and tax-supported agencies with related or complementary purposes together is a desirable step. It was definitely recommended by the Joint Committee.

## *EXTENSION AND PRIVATE AGENCIES*

The breadth of Extension activities brings the staff of the Service into a great number of relationships with hundreds of private agencies on all levels of operation. It will be recalled that railroads, businessmen and their associations, and others supported Dr. Knapp's early program. The county agent is a welcome and often an invited speaker before village and town chambers of commerce and luncheon clubs. Businessmen in these centers are fully aware that their own prosperity is related to the well-being of the farmers in their trade area. During the recent war, hundreds of such groups helped Extension in recruiting emergency farm labor to assist in harvesting.

Another example of the coordination of agencies is an Extension circular published in 1929 by the federal office on *Extension and the County Church*. Cooperation of Extension with the American Red Cross, especially at the time of its annual roll call, is all but routine. In many places there are joint enterprises with groups of producers concerned with single commodities, such as vegetable growers, breeders' associations, cow-testing associations, cooperatives, and so on. Some of these relationships are occasional. Some are more or less frequent or even continuous. The general farm organizations, with their state and local units, are important outlets for Extension teaching. In a number of states, Extension has had especially close relationships with one of these, the Farm Bureau, through almost its entire history. Since this relationship has become controversial, no account of the Extension Service would be complete without devoting some attention to it.

### *The Farm Bureau and Extension*

From the very inception of Extension work, its leaders recog-

nized that it would be impossible to reach the more than 2,000 farmers in the average county by farm visits and poorly attended meetings. It was early evident that an organization of farmers was necessary which would cooperate with the county agent, vouch for the program to all concerned, and indeed, by helping to formulate the program on the basis of their knowledge of local needs, make it their own.

This was sound thinking. It is still the essence of Extension philosophy that local programs be based on local needs as expressed by the people themselves.

To facilitate reaching more farmers, therefore, the agents attempted to secure local cooperation through organizations which took various names. It was in New York, apparently, that the first Farm Bureau Association, so called, was organized, in 1913, before the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. It was a membership, dues-paying organization. It not only helped the educational work of the county agent, but also brought him into direct contact with farmers and made their experience available to him. Quite a number of the first farm bureaus were organized by farmers who were members of the Grange, nation-wide general farm organization. In the South, Dr. Knapp pointed out the value of cooperating organizations of local farmers and paid tribute to the helpfulness of the Farmers Union, another national farm organization.

### *Farm Bureaus Promoted by the Department of Agriculture*

The farm bureau idea caught on. After the passage of the Smith-Lever Act it was actively promoted by the Extension Service in the Department of Agriculture. This legislation was exclusively educational in purpose, and existing farm organizations appeared to be unsuitable for this objective. Some of them, in addition to their agricultural objectives, were secret organizations as well, for this was a time when the fraternal secret orders flourished in America. Others had economic or commercial objectives exclusively for the benefit of their members. In the very nature of the case, the Department of Agriculture and the state colleges could utilize only a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-secret organization which would include the whole farming population, men and women alike.

As extension work proved itself to farmers and businessmen, state legislatures began to pass acts enabling counties to appropriate tax funds for the support of the work. Many of these laws conditioned this permission on a certain number of farmers petitioning for the appropriation or on their forming an association and contributing membership funds to supplement the tax funds. At a national meeting in 1916, the name "County Farm Bureau" was adopted by the state county agent supervisors to designate all cooperating associations, however called. In 1918 the federal Extension office, then the Extension division of the States Relations Service, issued a circular (Document 88) which gave the following definition:

> A county farm bureau is an institution for the development of a county program of work in agriculture and home economics, and for cooperating with State and Government agencies in the development of profitable farm management and efficient and wholesome home and community life.

At a meeting of the Land-Grant Colleges in 1917, a model law was presented under which the "county extension associations known as farm bureaus could carry on no other activity than cooperation with the State Extension Service in conducting extension education."

When World War I brought an emergency expansion of the Extension Service, the organization of farm bureaus that would assist the agent in his work was urged by the Department of Agriculture.

### *State Federations Formed*

Even before that time, educational extension associations had begun to federate on a state basis, Missouri leading in 1915 and Illinois following in early 1916. The Illinois Federation of County Farm Bureaus voted to use the name Illinois Agricultural Association. Six months after its formation the Illinois association took up legislative problems as one of its chief concerns. This was the first break in the educational purposes of these farm bureaus. By 1919, however, only two-thirds of the twenty-three state farm bureau federation constitutions confined their statements of purpose to the terms of the definition given above or of the "model law."

*The American Farm Bureau Federation Organized*

In March, 1920, the American Farm Bureau Federation was formed, one of its major purposes being to express farmers' needs for legislation to aid agriculture. Many farm bureaus entered into such commercial activities as the cooperative purchase of supplies. In a very few months, Extension administrators in the states and in the federal office realized that the farm bureau had become a general farm organization and something quite different than had originally been intended.

It is worth while to interrupt the historical narrative at this point to analyze what happened. In one sense the formation of the state and national associations might have been anticipated. It was entirely consistent with what is known of the sociology of social institutions. The county farm bureaus had been sponsored by the Extension Service to facilitate its work, which was educational in nature. But the educational activities offered were those which appeared to meet the needs of farmers. It was difficult for the average farmer to understand why a county agent, for instance, could teach about cooperative marketing but could not assist in the organization of a cooperative, or become an officer in one sponsored by the farm bureau, which in many cases was paying part of the agent's salary. For the federal office to take this position appeared to many a denial of the very grass roots philosophy which Extension had espoused. It seemed to be turning away from meeting a need the farmers considered paramount, especially when the postwar agricultural depression began. Many agents were of the same opinion and accepted responsibilities under the new program.

Any dynamic institution seeks to make itself steadily more useful to its members, to enlarge its size, its program, and its influence. It was quite apparent to many farm leaders that state federations would be better able than unfederated county bureaus to influence legislative appropriations in behalf of the college of agriculture and its Extension Service. It was an easy step from this to an attempt to influence other legislation deemed advantageous or detrimental to the general well-being of agriculture. These state federations, tied in closely as they were with operating farmers in half the states, seemed to furnish a mechanism ready-made to carry

the program of the state organizations up to the level of national policy and politics.

### *A Dilemma for the Department of Agriculture*

The whole movement, coming so speedily to its fruition, created a serious dilemma for the Department of Agriculture. Other national farm organizations immediately began to complain to the Department that the relationship of the farm bureau to Extension gave it an unfair competitive advantage in seeking members. They also alleged, and still do, that county agents because of their financial ties with county bureaus, confined their educational work and services largely or wholly to the members of the bureau and neglected non-members, despite the language of the Smith-Lever Act which made the Service available "to the people of the United States."

Complaints also came from many local merchants that the business activities of the bureau, which competed with them, were subsidized by tax money when the agent served as an officer of a bureau cooperative or other business activity.

On the other hand, the Department of Agriculture had helped to organize many of these bureaus. They were recognized in the laws of almost half the states, and in a few the local share of the cost of Extension came exclusively from the bureaus. Only Maine and Rhode Island adhered to the "model law." These two states have never joined the American Farm Bureau Federation, and their county and state bureaus have remained true to the original educational purposes for which they were organized.

Even where the legal and financial ties were not as strong as in some states, the relationships between the Extension Service and the bureaus were close, too close to be broken instantly by an administrative order.

### *The True-Howard Agreement*

The Department quickly moved to an attempted solution of its difficulties and in 1921 negotiated an agreement between it and the American Farm Bureau Federation known as the True-Howard agreement. This agreement stipulated that regardless of the source of the county funds, agents must serve all farm people "whether members of the Farm Bureau or not." It was also agreed

that agents would no longer organize bureaus or other units of any farm organization or "conduct membership campaigns, solicit memberships, receive dues, handle Farm Bureau funds, edit and manage Farm Bureau publications, manage the business of the Farm Bureau, engage in commercial activities or take part in other Farm Bureau activities which are outside their duties as Extension agents" [i.e., as educators]. The next year the Secretary of Agriculture issued instructions to the Extension Service personnel reiterating these principles.

The situation did not clear up immediately. Now and then it was necessary for the Secretary of Agriculture to draw renewed attention to the regulations.

In 1948 the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals noted that "criticisms continue to prevail." It paid tribute to the "splendid support" given by the Farm Bureau to Extension, noting that the trend over the years in the states had "been toward the elimination of operating relationships." It stated:

> ... Today such relationships exist in only a few States, among which only seven States have laws which still require local sponsorship of extension work by an organization known as a county farm bureau. However, even if the operating relationships in States where they do prevail are of the finest, and are in accordance with the aforementioned agreement, it is recognized that other States feel the adverse reactions currently manifest regarding these relationships. They are somewhat detrimental to extension work in other States.
>
> This committee expresses its conviction that it is not sound public policy for extension to give preferred service to any farm organization or to be in a position of being charged with such actions. The committee is further convinced that it would be in the public interest for any formal operating relationships between the Extension Service and any general farm organization such as the Farm Bureau to be discontinued at the earliest possible moment.[5]

To this conclusion one member of the Committee filed a vigorous dissent.[5] However, early in 1949 a bill was introduced into the United States Senate providing for the withholding of federal appropriations for Extension in those states which had an operating agreement with a single farm organization.

[5] *Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals.* Washington, D. C., August, 1948. U. S. Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948), pp. 23–24.

In the light of this action and of the finding of the Joint Committee, it may be pointed out to those from other lands interested in creating an Extension Service *de novo* that the experience of the United States indicates:

1. That a local organization through which an Extension Service can work is desirable.
2. That if such an organization is created by law, such a law should confine the program of the organization solely to educational purposes.
3. That all support for the Service should come from tax funds.

*Situation Overemphasized*

One unfortunate result of the association of the Extension Service with the Farm Bureau has been the complete identification of the Service with Bureau policies on the part of the non-rural public. For this reason, a further word on the situation is appropriate. In addition to the seven states which have written Extension-Bureau cooperation into their laws, which seven include Maine and Rhode Island, six require sponsorship by some organization. In Missouri only half of these sponsoring organizations are farm bureaus. In ten states, including most of the seven just mentioned, the county farm bureau administers the local Extension funds cooperatively with the state college. Less than 4 per cent of the Extension Service personnel, located in only four states, now receive any part of their salary from local county bureaus. In up to fourteen states, however, local county bureaus contribute to one or more such things as travel expense, equipment, office rent, or the salary of a clerk. In the current fiscal year, farm organizations raised slightly more than $1½ million for Extension, about 3 per cent of the total budget. This proportion has steadily declined from about 8 per cent in 1915. Over the years federal contributions to Extension have increased about twentyfold, those of the states and counties from tax funds about sixteenfold, and those of farm organizations less than sixfold. About one-third of this last increase took place before the organization of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

## *IN SUMMARY*

It is essential not to overweight the importance of the relationship of the Extension Service to any particular farm organization.

The essential element in Extension Service experience lies in the fact that the very nature of its work requires close contact with its constituents. As Chapter 2 showed, this has taken many forms. This chapter has shown further that, as an educational agency drawing its materials of instruction from as many authentic sources as possible and dispensing it through many channels, the Extension Service as a public agency must maintain close, co-operative, relationships with many and diverse agencies, federal, state, and local.

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## EXTENSION'S DEVELOPING PROGRAM: 1914–1945

This report has dealt thus far in one sense with the blueprints of Extension's organization. What has been said of the program of work has been incidental to the focus upon the structure or machinery through which any program operates.

It is now appropriate to turn to a description of what Extension has accomplished from its birth in 1914 to the close of World War II in 1945. The postwar years will be considered later. The discussion will be concerned only with the over-all, national aspects of Extension. The period under review falls naturally into four phases. The first is that of World War I. The second is the decade of industrial prosperity and agrarian discontent and depression, the 1920's. The third is the period of the "Great Depression," the dismal thirties, when for the first time the United States sought to weld a national agricultural policy. Finally there is the period of World War II. The important national and world forces and events of these periods exerted great influence upon Extension, which in each period altered its program to meet the changing educational needs of rural America.

### *1914–1919*

The Extension Service commenced operation under the Smith-Lever Act in the year in which World War I began in Europe. It was a lusty infant of three when the United States entered the conflict.

America's entry into the war brought new duties to the county agent. All branches of the Extension Service, of the state agricultural colleges, and of the United States Department of Agriculture were materially affected. Plans for the year were changed to meet emergency conditions. It was clear that the most important problem of the American farmer was to increase food production. All other lines of work were made secondary to this.

To produce more and more food as a wartime measure called for a more extensive application of the educational and demonstrational methods used by Extension workers, who taught not only to produce but also to eliminate waste, and to conserve and preserve food that was being produced. It was evident during this period that the agricultural extension system which aimed originally at guiding the farmers with better methods of production, and better ideas and ideals for enriching farm life in normal times, should be the logical organization to furnish the necessary leadership in the wartime campaign for greater food production. This new occasion for teaching farmers ways and means of meeting a national crisis brought about a sharp increase in the people's confidence in Extension workers. Their prestige was enhanced. "The 'book farmer' and the 'agricultural missionary' of 1914," says Baker, "found himself the patriotic leader of numerous war campaigns, a service agent for many branches of the federal government and a propagandist of a high order."[1]

Out of a special war appropriation to the Department of Agriculture, $4,348,400 was designated for "the further development of the Extension Service which is conducted in cooperation with the agricultural colleges in various States." Special attention was given to the South in an effort to persuade farmers to raise more of their own food and feed. Elsewhere emphasis was given to spring wheat and other cereals, and increased livestock and poultry production. The home demonstration agents worked with both farm and urban housewives, urging them to stay within their wheat allowances and to save sugar, meat, and other foodstuffs. Practically the whole program of home demonstration work was centered in the objective of food preservation and conservation.

In addition, Extension workers, especially the county agent, took part in local wartime activities such as "the Red Cross, Liberty Loan, and other campaigns, and gave assistance to the War Department in the purchase of horses for the Army; helped organize farm-loan associations, distributed circulars, posters; gave information and collected data for various departments of the State and Federal governments. They held meetings and made addresses acquainting the farmers and people generally with the issues of the war."[2]

[1] Gladys Baker, *The County Agent* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 41.

[2] USDA, *Report on Agricultural Experiment Stations* (1917), Part II, p. 168.

### *The Safe Farming Program*

Some of the details of this work deserve mention. One was the so-called Safe Farming Program which centered in the South. This region had long concentrated on cotton and tobacco as its chief cash crops and raised less of its own food than other regions. Estimates showed that the South was importing hundreds of millions of dollars worth of food and feed from other parts of the country. This was a serious drain in view of the war demands for food at home and abroad. It was also realized that the undue concentration on and expansion of the non-edible cash crops of the South might have unfortunate economic consequences after the war. Hence the intensive "safe farming" program was launched with the aim of increasing sharply the amount of food raised in the South. The production of corn, peanuts, soya beans, potatoes, meat, milk, eggs, and fodder crops showed significant increases as a result of this program. This was the first major effort to secure a greater degree of diversification in the agriculture of the region and to improve its standard of living by expanding local food production.

### *Home and Community Gardens*

Food production was not neglected elsewhere. Agricultural, home demonstration, and 4–H club agents all promoted home and community gardens. Garden clubs were organized among boys and girls in cooperation with public schools and social organizations. Contests and prizes were used to increase the already high interest of the children in this program. Those who made the best records in their states were awarded medals, and state champions were enrolled in a national "All-Star Club." Home demonstration agents were also highly successful in this garden campaign and extended their work into the towns and cities.

### *Club Demonstration Work*

Demonstration methods were extensively employed by 4–H club boys and girls in vitalizing the wartime program. In each community, club members received instruction from Extension leaders in food conservation and production. In turn, these boys and girls made use of "achievement days" or fairs and festivals to demonstrate to their people the results of the year's experience in learning improved practices both in agriculture and in home

economics. Each community received the benefit of the demonstration work through seeing what the boys and girls had accomplished.

*Labor Exchange Activities*

In order to help in meeting the acute farm labor shortage of the war years, Extension workers were quite active in cooperating with labor exchange agencies to aid farmers in securing sufficient laborers. Outstanding among such agencies were the "Boys Working Reserve," organized by the Department of Labor; the "Women's Land Army," which put women temporarily on farms to assist in harvesting crops or in household service; the "shock troops" and "twilight crews" organized by businessmen to help farmers during the harvest season; the "United States Saturday Service League," which was organized by Negro agents to encourage rural Negroes to render six full days of service each week during the war.

*Community Organizations*

The emergency of war work brought about a keen interest in community organizations. Outstanding among agencies active in local communities were the councils of defense whose function was the coordination of industries, resources, and agencies for national security and welfare. At one time there were well over 4,000 of these local councils. The Extension Service laid special emphasis on this type of organization in small communities, especially in the South, as a means of relating rural people to the total war effort.

*Impact on Extension*

All this meant a considerably expanded Extension staff, especially in home demonstration work. At the close of the war there were nearly 2,700 county agents. Three-fifths of these, however, were emergency war-work employees, many of them successful farmers who served in their home counties. Home demonstration agents numbered about 1,700, more than three-fourths on emergency status.

The war permitted rural people in many counties served only by emergency agents to see how valuable the Extension Service could be. The result was a more rapid expansion in the regular staff after the war than would otherwise have taken place. The

success of Extension in its war programs greatly increased the prestige of the Service among its constituents and in government circles, including Congress.

## *EXTENSION IN THE 1920'S*

The 1920's were an extremely significant period in American agriculture. During World War I the farmer had enjoyed high prices. Under their stimulus and the pleas for increased food production, and using to a greater extent than ever before tractors and combines brought but recently within his reach, the farmer increased his acreage as well as his production, often on borrowed money. The immediate postwar period had seen a continued upward trend in the prices he received for most commodities. The turn came quickly early in 1920. A severe agricultural depression set in. Hundreds of thousands of farmers found themselves in difficulties. Tens of thousands suffered foreclosure. Many rural banks failed.

### *The Depression and Extension*

The situation had immediate repercussions in the Extension Service. The number of counties with agricultural agents declined about one-third and those with home demonstration agents by more than one-half. In one sense these figures are a tribute to Extension, for most of the loss was chargeable to the failure of counties, hard pressed financially, to replace an emergency agent with a permanent one. Actually the number of permanent agents increased in many states. The more immediate and lasting effect was on the program of the Extension Service. Increasing production was no longer of paramount importance. Rather, there was need to explore every possibility for cutting costs and for marketing as effectively as possible. The farmer was greatly interested in securing a larger share of the consumer's food dollar. Marketing specialists were added to state college staffs. Agents began to teach about cooperative marketing, and in general stressed the business or economic side of farming in addition to their teaching better farming. The movement to make the farm more self-sustaining, especially with respect to its own food, received further impetus. The regard the Extension Service had won was shown by the fact that farm people turned to it for help

and advice. Home demonstration agents assisted by instruction in many aspects of more efficient and economical home management.

*Community Programs*

Early in the twentieth century the great Irish rural leader, Sir Horace Plunkett, in his book *The Rural Life Problem of the United States,* had urged as a program for rural America "better farming, better business, better living." Sir Horace was very influential in President Theodore Roosevelt's appointment of the Country Life Commission, discussed in Chapter 1. This Commission, reporting in 1909, had noted the increasing interest of farmers and their wives, who attended its hearings, in a fuller and richer rural life. Experience in the following decade reinforced the rural determination to achieve "better living."

The Red Cross and community service programs during the war had given many of the rural population a broader vision of organized community life. Increasing mobility and more numerous contacts with urban life broadened the outlook of many people. Moreover, wartime prosperity had raised the standard of living of many farmers and of communities. School consolidation, for instance, had received a real impetus and rural education was thereby improved. The farm population was not ready to surrender these gains and aspirations. In trying to help satisfy these wholesome desires, Extension workers soon found themselves fully occupied in a much wider range of educational activities than they had carried on before. They began to deal more largely with community groups in committees and public meetings than with individuals: Surveys were conducted to find out the needs of different communities, on the basis of which different community programs were set up. One of these surveys covering 10,000 farm homes showed that the problems confronting farm women were by no means wholly economic. Their attention seemed, rather, to shift to certain cultural aspects of farm life heretofore neglected. They began to learn from demonstration workers what might help to shorten their working day, to lessen their labor, to promote higher standards of comfort and beauty in their homes, to safeguard the health of their families. They were equally interested in problems connected with the school, the church, and organized recreation and social life. Indeed, farm homes and rural communities began to be treated as integral parts

of the whole Extension program. To make these homes and communities more wholesome and satisfying became a major objective. In response to calls from the counties for help along these lines the Extension program was broadened to include rural sociology, recreation, child development, and home beautification. Specialists in these subjects began to be added to state staffs. In Wisconsin, which pioneered in this area, hundreds of Extension groups began studying and discussing public affairs and still other hundreds became actively engaged in drama and music projects.

*Demonstration Revived*

The old demonstration method, which had been somewhat crowded out during the war, was revived. The average number of demonstrations per agent rose from 45 in 1920 to 92 in 1922. In connection with these demonstrations, meetings, tours, excursions, farmers' institutes, extension schools, and short courses were provided for an increasing number of people. Integration within counties was furthered as agents cooperated more than ever with local leaders to frame county programs. Club members were encouraged to choose those projects which would develop to the fullest extent their interests and abilities and at the same time would easily carry over into the community the practices and experiences which they learned from these projects. This last feature furthered immeasurably better coordination with the total county program.

*Local Leaders Developed*

This period also witnessed a very great expansion in the use of local leaders, with which there had already been limited but successful experience, particularly with the demonstration work and among the women. It was realized that if leaders could be adequately trained and supervised by the agents they could multiply to total impact of Extension.

The types of local leaders developed in different states varied with the amount of responsibility assumed by local people. However, four main groups can be classified. The first group consisted of those local leaders who served as general liaison officers between the agents and the people, and acted as demonstrators of improved practices. The second group was represented by those who, besides

acting as demonstrators, had enlisted the active participation of others and assumed responsibility for securing records of practices adopted. A third group was made up of persons who were recognized as representatives of a community or township to receive from the specialist or home demonstration agent training in subject matter and in methods of presentation, which in turn they would pass on to their own groups. Finally some leaders were sufficiently competent to train others in local leadership and sometimes to supervise them. As early as 1923 over 182,000 persons were serving as local leaders. They contributed almost half a million days of unpaid service, the equivalent of 1,600 men and women working through an entire year.

This period also saw the beginning of Extension's interest in long-term planning and improvement in methods of teaching and presentation, as well as the rapid development of instruction by motion pictures and radio. These last matters, however, relate to methods and techniques rather than programs and will be discussed in a later chapter.

## *THE 1930'S*

During this decade, depression gripped the entire western world and the recovery which had seemed to be under way in American agriculture in 1928–1929 was engulfed in the spreading economic catastrophe. The first two years of this intensified depression again illustrated the adaptability of Extension's program to the needs of the rural people. The following examples illustrate this adaptability. In the effort to conserve every resource home demonstration agents in several states gave instruction in making various types of garments for ordinary work use from empty flour sacks. Especially in the South, some excellent instruction was given in the use of resources ready at hand in nature but formerly neglected. At the other extreme in Iowa, with the aid of the social scientists on the instructional and research staffs, a series of ten studies was prepared relating such things as taxes, war debts, tariffs, and the like directly to the well-being of the farmer. Farm groups throughout the state and elsewhere studied these and debated possible solutions for their difficulties.

With the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt as President and the passage of the Agricultural Adjustment Act in 1933, a new era began in Extension.

## *Extension and the AAA*

In many ways the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) called for more cooperation on the part of the Extension Service than any other of the agricultural policies initiated at this time. Though the concept of adjusting production of the seven "basic" crops, later changed to fifteen, to probable demand had overwhelming farmer approval, as registered by votes on specific programs, it was quite a new idea, never before attempted in American agriculture. The President himself in sending the proposed act to Congress stated: "I tell you frankly that it is a new and untrod path, but I tell you with equal frankness that an unprecedented condition calls for the trial of new means to rescue agriculture." Inevitably, in an unprecedented enterprise of this sort, education was required as to the philosophy of the act, the economic conditions that called it forth, and the economic results that were to be expected, as well as to methods of operation and administration. As noted in Chapter 5, local administration was in the hands of committees of farmers elected by their neighbors. These committeemen had never before functioned in anything approaching this sort of program. It was natural that they should turn to the county agent for assistance. It can fairly be said that the county agents rendered indispensable service in this program.

In conducting the "educational phases" of the AAA, for instance, workers from the state Extension office and the AAA officials generally met with the county agents and the county AAA committeemen first in state or district meetings, where they discussed and explained the new developments in connection with production control measures. These state or district meetings were followed by county and community meetings dealing with the same subjects. In each county, the responsibility of organization and execution generally rested on the county agent, who helped farmers to make their local adjustment programs. However, the responsibility assumed by the county agents varied from state to state, depending on the type of commodity programs being followed. In the corn-hog and wheat programs, for instance, county agents almost always appointed temporary allotment committees. "Sign-up" campaigns[3] and elections for permanent town-

[3] By "signing up" the farmer entered into a contract with the government to reduce his plantings of any of the basic crops in proportion to the decline in exports and to plant the land released to soil-conserving crops.

ship committeemen were conducted by these temporary committees.

### *Cooperation in Program Showed Regional Variations*

The amount of assistance that the county agents gave to these committeemen varied greatly. In Iowa, some county agents were found to be almost completely carrying the work for the AAA committees, while in others the committees took complete charge, some even setting up their own offices apart from the agents'. In the cotton, tobacco, and peanut programs of the South, county agents took a more active part in organizing and directing the general activities of the AAA programs. Generally speaking, Extension workers in the South assumed substantially more responsibility in the AAA programs than leaders in other states. County agents in the Northern states cooperated less closely with these new federal action agencies.

For this there were various reasons. Few of the "basic" crops under the first program were raised in New England, and they were significant only to a minor degree in the Middle Atlantic states. It was not until later legislation was passed that these regions became involved in the program. Moreover, because of the specialized nature of agriculture in these Northeastern states, there had been less need of this type of farm relief legislation. Farmers and the Extension Service were therefore less interested. There had been less discussion of this and other proposed remedies for the agricultural depression than had gone on in the South and especially in the Midwest. There was some opposition to the whole philosophy embodied in the act. It was not easy for farmers whose total production was marketed in nearby cities and towns to visualize the plight of the farmer accustomed to having a large proportion of his output go for export, when his overseas outlet disappeared. In some states, therefore, there was only nominal cooperation with the program, and in a few practically none. It is worth pointing out that this position was in complete harmony with Extension procedure. Barring a legislative mandate the Extension Service in the United States Department of Agriculture has no power, and desires none, to dictate to the states what they should do.

The Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, however, at its meeting in the fall of 1933, agreed to cooperate with

*Courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture*

District conservationist in charge of planning, county agent, and contact man for S.C.S., looking at enlargement of the A.A.A. Serial Map (Kent, Maryland)

the AAA in the educational aspects of the program, but felt that its educational staff should not be charged with responsibilities for the action features of the law. There was no project agreement with the federal Extension Service, as far as the obligation of the states to this new job was concerned. However, the Extension Service welcomed this new opportunity for rendering an enlarged service to agriculture and rural life and used its existing machinery to the fullest possible extent. State extension workers and county agricultural agents in most states devoted much of their time to organizing and training county and community committeemen, holding meetings with farmers, assisting farmers to execute their contracts, measuring fields to determine compliance, distributing checks for benefit and acreage-rental payments, and attending to many other details involved in the production control administration.[4]

*Extension and Soil Conservation*

The agricultural legislation of the 1930's gave a great impetus to soil conservation. After the first Agricultural Adjustment Act had been declared unconstitutional, the substitute legislation which replaced it was tied directly to soil conservation. The formation of soil conservation districts, by which groups of farmers received technical assistance in instituting soil-conserving practices, was also provided for in the legislation of this period.

In educational meetings held by the Extension Service this and other new types of assistance were made known to the farmers. Through the help of the county agents, soil-conservation demonstration areas were chosen, and cooperation from local leaders was secured. The agents were also responsible for organizing cooperative soil conservation associations, soil conservation districts, and rural zoning and district land use planning programs. County agents sometimes took groups of farmers on tours to visit major erosion-control project areas. In 1937, Illinois, for instance, coordinated its entire Extension Service with the soil conservation program. Within the state, all energies and efforts were mustered from the Extension specialists in agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, crops, forestry, and soils for the sole purpose of working out a whole-farm-approach soil conservation program.

[4] USDA, *Yearbook of Agriculture, 1935* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1935), p. 101.

Extension specialists, in collaboration with county agents, held 3-day schools in eighty-one counties in the state, where 5,465 farmers were helped to understand better the different phases of the soil conservation problem.[5] Similar activities were carried out in other states.

*Extension and Rehabilitation*

County agents worked closely with the government's rural rehabilitation program to extend loans and a limited number of subsistence grants to farmers. Serving as chairman of the county Rural Rehabilitation Committee, the county agent recommended prospective clients and gave technical advice on farm plans, as measured by crop prospects, so as to help farmers repay the loans. County agents also kept close contact with the Farm Security Administration in providing a credit program for underprivileged farmers. Furthermore, in a number of counties county agents worked with the Farm Credit Administration to supervise credit demonstrations whose objectives were to familiarize the farmers with available lending agencies, and to advise them on a sound program of farming which would assure their ability to repay any loan.

Another significant contribution of Extension agents in connection with the rural rehabilitation program was the endeavor to improve rental and lease agreements between tenants and landlords. In Arkansas, in 1937, help in making improved agreements was given to 21,225 tenant farmers. In Oklahoma, Extension workers conducted a survey of the tenant situation in that state. In many states, county agents also helped to organize county debt adjustment committees. Through these committees, creditors were persuaded to scale down debts and to readjust their relationship with over 203,000 farm debtors, in the light of changed conditions and in accordance with farm purchasing power and land values.

Extension workers, especially the home demonstration agents, also did remarkable rehabilitation work. Agents and specialists cooperated with state and federal relief agencies to develop a comprehensive family program specifically adapted to the needy. State specialists and home demonstration staffs contributed much

[5] USDA, *Serving Farm People on Many Fronts* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1937), p. 6.

to the institutional standards and procedures used by relief agencies and assisted in instructing their clients. An illustration showing how effective home demonstration had been in rural rehabilitation programs can be drawn from South Carolina. In this state, home demonstration workers tried to stress through their plantation demonstrations the mutual interdependence of plantation owners and sharecroppers. Instruction on home food and feed supply programs not only brought better health and better returns for their work to many sharecroppers but, in addition, higher income to the landlords. In promoting this program, Extension agents in this state "placed added emphasis on sponsoring and helping to hold health clinics, on human disease prevention, on school lunches, on diets to prevent tooth decay, and on helping solve other problems that hit low-income farm families hardest."[6]

### *Discussion of Public Affairs*

One of the most interesting programs of this period related to the discussion of public affairs. As noted earlier a few states had had successful programs in this activity for a number of years. In 1934–1935 a project of this sort was sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture on an experimental basis in ten counties located in nine states.

In conducting these discussion groups, the Department of Agriculture prepared a list of subjects and rigorously impartial materials, including bibliographies, that covered all major aspects of each issue.[7] These were distributed to state Extension leaders. The state leaders then sent the list to the county agents, who in turn gave it to the local discussion groups. Such groups as were formed were sent the materials. Procedures in organizing these discussion groups varied. In some states, all those who were interested were invited to join. In others, different groups were organized for men, women, and youth. In many instances local farm organizations, such as the Grange, Farm Bureau, and Farmers' Union, requested this program. As the program expanded the states frequently issued their own materials, which

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[7] In 1936 one of the outside consultants used by the USDA on this program was visited by a member of the national committee of a political party which hoped to make political capital of these discussion materials because of "propaganda at taxpayer expense." After an hour's examination of them he remarked, "Nothing can be pinned on these materials. They really are impartial. Let's go fishing."

varied widely. In some states, pamphlets pertaining to each major topic were printed. In others, mimeographed sheets with suggestions were considered sufficient. In general, however, simple topical outlines with bibliography seemed to be most desirable. The Department continued to prepare a few sample outlines, published guides for discussion leaders, and held two training conferences for the state personnel responsible for the program.

## *EXTENSION IN WORLD WAR II*

Extension history repeated itself with the coming of World War II, save that the greater scope of the struggle as compared with the first world conflict made the demands upon the American farmer for food and fiber all the heavier. The Department of Agriculture state and county war boards have already been referred to. The function of these boards was to consider all war matters relating to agriculture and rural people and to assign specific duties to the organizations and agencies represented on the Board. Naturally the Extension Service was expected to carry on all educational and informational work. Actually the county agents undertook far more than this. They were concerned with investigating petitions for the purchase of farm machinery and for farm construction, with applications for draft deferment because of essential agricultural labor, with granting permits for livestock slaughter, with emergency crop and feed loans, and with the farm labor program.

In one New England county with slightly less than 1,500 farms, most of them small, the Extension office in little over a year handled appeals for additional gasoline rations from one-third of the farms, investigated over 350 applications connected with other aspects of farm rationing, and reported to draft boards on 169 selective service cases. In one year it secured over 1,500 persons for part-time or short-term work in harvesting crops.

### *Farm Labor Program*

This last-named activity was a new, unexpected, and not always welcome task. It was assigned by Congress and involved an administrative and action program. A separate division was set up in the federal office and in the states to handle this task. The program involved direct action in the recruiting, training, and placing of

farm labor (men, women, and youth) from local, urban, and interstate sources as well as from the West Indies, Mexico, and the Maritime Provinces of Canada; the establishment of farm placement centers; the training of workers; and a broad program of education on farm labor problems and ways of solving them. The cooperation of county Extension workers with the federal branch of the farm labor program left nothing to be desired. The Extension Service's mobilization of farm labor was an outstanding contribution to our success in World War II. Though the program did not start until the spring of 1943, 2,700,000 workers were placed on farms during the five months ending September 30. One-fourth of these were youth enlisting as Victory Farm Volunteers, one-fifth were women. As the program swung into full stride the number of annual placements reached six million. Moreover, in every year this division was able to turn back some millions of dollars of its appropriation to the Treasury.

*Regular Activities War-Centered*

Of course the regular work of Extension was focused on the national objective of winning the war. There was great emphasis upon food production, including victory gardens so that the family "could live at home," and upon food preservation and nutrition. Home demonstration agents taught war cookery designed to compensate for the shortage of rationed goods without lowering the nutritional value of the food intake. 4–H club members helped greatly. They raised victory gardens, grew essential war crops, raised meat animals, and canned millions of jars of fruits, vegetables, and meats. They helped to relieve the labor shortage, served as neighborhood leaders, and helped in war activities. It is estimated that from 1943 on 4–H club members produced all told enough food to feed a million men serving in the American forces. The 4–H safety project has been recognized as one of the best organized of all the nation-wide farm and home safety programs which involved farm people.

County agents also devoted much effort to encouraging non-farm people who possessed some land to grow victory gardens. The success of the whole program was substantial. In the first full year of the war 15 million families had victory gardens, two-thirds of them non-farm. In 1943 and later this number averaged close to 20 million and produced approximately 8 million tons of food.

*Neighborhood Leaders*

One interesting program of the war years was the Neighborhood Leader plan. It became apparent early in the war that the number of Extension meetings would have to be reduced but that the need for speedy communication "with the last farm family down the last road" was greater than ever. A plan of having one man and one woman in each neighborhood responsible for contact with every ten or twenty families was therefore worked out. It was adopted by a large number of the counties—frequently 100 per cent—in forty-seven of the states. In this way 260,000 neighborhoods were actually laid out, at the peak, and over 600,000 persons cooperated as Neighborhood Leaders, each one receiving not only necessary materials but also some training from Extension. Each Neighborhood Leader was responsible for getting urgent war information to his or her families, for carrying out action programs in the neighborhood, and for relaying back to the county agent problems or situations needing attention. In some states, at the request of the Office of Civilian Defense, Extension also organized this plan in villages and towns. All told about eighty different programs of activities were entrusted to the Neighborhood Leaders, though of course not all states or counties participated in every one. Among these activities were the following:

*Food in wartime:*

Home food supply
Victory gardens
Food preservation, canning
Dehydration, freezing
Food storage
Enriched flour and bread
Sugar rationing
Sugar substitutes
Meat alternates
Soybeans for food
Wartime poultry practices

*Farm production:*

Farm production goals
New crops for war needs
Production of soybeans and peanuts
Planting winter legumes
Feed-wheat program
Fertilizers and sprays restriction
Cattle-grub control
Boll-weevil control
Cotton leaf-worm control

*War campaigns:*

Home food supply for victory
Share-the-meat
Salvage—metal, rubber, bags, tin cans, fats, rayon, waste paper
United States war bonds and stamps
Red Cross drives

*Conservation:*

Pooling transportation of farm

products to market
Repair of farm machinery
Repair of farm and home equipment
Clothes remodeling
Clothing care and renovation
Grain storage situation
Rat control program

*Rural fire prevention:*

Organized control
Eliminating hazards
Clothing for fire fighters
Feeding fire fighters

*Surveys:*

Labor
Farm machinery
Fire hazards

*Other war programs:*

Explaining price control
Explaining priorities affecting farms and homes
Water purification
Blackout measures for home civilian defense programs

As the war progressed and conditions improved the Neighborhood Leader plan was less used in some areas, partly because other ways were found to care for these tasks more effectively, and partly because some agents were too occupied with their many other war tasks to keep the plan operating. On the other hand, a few states and many counties continued to operate the plan even after the cessation of hostilities.[8]

This, in brief, sketches the history of the Extension Service to the end of World War II. As the war drew to a close, people and organizations began to look ahead. It was clear that the war had wrought changes and had uncovered new areas of need. Postwar programs began to emerge on national, state, city, and county levels and from countless organizations. Great new international organizations came into being under the United Nations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Extension, too, set itself to the task of appraisal. Several of the states and the federal staff began to develop postwar programs. The Secretary of Agriculture and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities appointed a joint committee to review Extension's policies of the past and make suggestions for the future. Its report has already been quoted several times in previous chapters.

[8] A comparable section could be written on the contribution of the Extension Service throughout its history in various catastrophes, such as floods, drought, blizzards, and the like. Such activities, however, are emergency and temporary in character and while highly effective and often much praised by relief agencies, state government, and the press are not central in the programs of the Service.

The remainder of this monograph deals with the postwar period —with the present and the future. It raises questions with respect to issues not yet settled. It deals with programs and program planning, with methods of teaching, with training lay and professional personnel. Finally it examines the trends and attempts both to evaluate and to forecast.

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## PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM PLANNING

THE words "useful" and "practical" furnish the keynote for almost all of the work done by the Extension Service in the early years of its history. This was made clear in the previous chapter. It was an emphasis to be expected. The factual information available in those days was almost wholly in the basic science of production. The science of home economics was not nearly as well developed, and the body of knowledge concerned with the broader social and economic problems of rural life was indeed meager. However, as that knowledge increased and as rural people became conscious of more needs, the program of Extension broadened, as has also been shown in the previous chapter. But the influence of many years of history remains. Together with the training Extension workers have received, it demands that much of Extension education be vocational. This, moreover, was contemplated in the basic Smith-Lever Act. What appears necessary today is not appreciable curtailment of vocational work but considerable expansion of the non-vocational in the light of changed conditions and a better integration of the two.[1] But of this more later. The purpose of this chapter is to give illustrations of local programs and to discuss some of the procedures in local program planning, as well as the sociological and economic factors which influence both.

### *PROGRAMS IN TECHNICAL AGRICULTURE*

It should be pointed out again that Extension has no universally applied program. Any local county program is what the people concerned make it. Eighty-four per cent of the 68,494 localities in which Extension worked in 1947 had programs planned by agents and local committees. This accounts for the variety and

[1] Cf. USDA, Extension Service, *Report of Committee on the Scope of Extension's Educational Responsibility* (January, 1946).

extent of the illustrations which follow, drawn largely from the 1947 official report.

*Machinery*

The mechanization of agriculture goes on apace. New inventions like the mechanical cotton picker have come on the market. Light, rubber-tired, all-purpose tractors have expanded the areas in which tractor operation becomes profitable. There are now close to 3,500,000 tractors on American farms, an increase of a million in less than five years. Combines, corn pickers, and milking machines have almost doubled in the same period. In many states, therefore, the Extension Service has conducted farm machinery schools on a county basis, usually attended by 100 or more farmers. In Wisconsin twenty demonstrations of grassland farming equipment attracted an attendance averaging 5,000 per demonstration. Approximately 100,000 farmers were instructed in selecting mechanical equipment, and over 200,000 in using such equipment and in its care and maintenance.

An interesting program was tried in a few of the coastal counties of the South, where there are many farms of from three to fifteen acres. Negro agents suggested group ownership of tractors and showed how this could be accomplished. Many of these farms now have the benefit of tractor preparation before planting.

*Homes and Other Buildings*

With the end of World War II and the easing of various scarcities, farm and village people turned eagerly to the erection of new homes or farm buildings, or the remodeling of old ones. Extension agents helped in the erection of nearly 50,000 new homes and the remodeling of over 100,000 in 1947. For other farm buildings comparable figures exceeded 75,000 and 85,000 respectively. The Service provided plans and cut-outs so that families could experiment with desired arrangements before going ahead with construction. One state alone estimated that the educational materials and advice, plus the use of one of the actual plans provided by the Service, saved the nearly 2,700 families who used these aids about $2,057,000. This sum is 60 per cent more than the entire cost of the Extension Service in that state.

*Production*

There have been in other chapters a number of illustrations

of Extension teaching to improve production. This indeed was a major element in Dr. Knapp's program, and perhaps never since Extension work began has high production been as necessary as in these last years. Small wonder, then, that thirty-nine states now have seed-improvement programs and that over half a million farm people participated in over 11,000 tours in 1947, to observe the results of the better seed and to see better methods in home and field.

The proper use of land is a basic factor in long-term profitable production and in soil conservation. In 1947 Extension's "class" in treating land according to its needs and working it according to its capacities numbered more than half a million farmers and 32,000 meetings involving Extension agents in cooperation with Soil Conservation Service workers.

One incident illustrates the practical cooperation of research and education. In the late 1930's and early 1940's, a new disease caused terrible losses to oats. By 1943 plant breeders in the United States Department of Agriculture and the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station had produced 25 pounds of seed that was resistant to this disease. This was sent to Arizona, where in the winter of 1943–1944 it produced 66 bushels of seed. In 1944, in Idaho, this was increased to 1,208 bushels. This was returned to Iowa and Extension agronomists in Illinois and Indiana were given 200 bushels each, the other 808 bushels remaining in Iowa. By 1947 a total of over 13 million bushels of certified blight-resistant Clinton oat seed was available. Ninety per cent of the oat crop in the Corn Belt is now planted with this seed. The big increase came when the Extension agronomists and county agents put small allotments of the new seed in the hands of selected farmers, taught them how to plant and tend it, and supervised them closely for certification. A similar story could be told about the development of Rescue Wheat, which is resistant to the sawfly.

### *More and Better Milk and Beef*

The dairy Extension program puts its emphasis on greater and more efficient production of milk. Under the war-induced shortages of grain, special attention was given to hay and pasture work. Demonstrations, tours, circulars, indeed practically every teaching method, were used in the work. At the present time 1,688 dairy herd-improvement associations, an all-time high, have been or-

ganized and are operating. Artificial breeding associations also have been promoted. Much interest has been shown by farmers in learning better methods of handling and feeding livestock. There is also an extensive varied poultry program. Since about one-tenth of all meat animals produced are used on the farm, hundreds of meat-cutting and curing demonstrations have been held, and methods of preparing meats, poultry, and other foods for freezing have been taught. Schools for freezer-locker plant operators have been held in a number of states, covering the construction, operation, and management of such plants, at the request of the operators.

A single local illustration shows how varied may be the approaches when programs such as these are fitted to local circumstances. Years ago a Negro agent in Georgia, seeing the need for a better diet among his people, organized the now famous ham and egg show among his farmers. In 1947, at the thirty-third of these shows, over 1,000 units of home-cured meat were exhibited. Twelve counties in this state and one or more of the other Southern states have now adopted this program.

### *Insects and Disease*

As rapidly as experiment stations reach a solution for some problem, Extension begins to teach its application. Sometimes this means emergency work to check a pest or blight already started; but planned prevention is the main objective, and this takes teaching and demonstration. In one state, the loss from ring rot in potatoes was reduced from 33 per cent a few years ago to 1 per cent during the 1947–1948 season. Acceptance by farmers, after seed-treating demonstrations, of the proper methods of preventing certain blights and parasites has added tens of thousands of tons to crops and millions of dollars to farm incomes.

### *Business and Marketing*

Wartime prosperity has lifted hundreds of thousands of farmers into the income-tax-paying group. There has been instruction in farm accounting in many states, in some especially for young farmers. One state alone distributed 50,000 copies of a farm record book. Assistance has also been given in the preparation of tax returns. Through its teaching of the results of farm management studies, Extension has also helped in the adoption of more efficient methods in this area at lower costs.

In marketing, practically all states have some program offerings. Extension realizes and teaches that marketing is more than just selling. Many factors are involved, including the habits and attitudes of human beings, the competitive situation, the transportation and terminal market facilities available, and so on. Extension teaching therefore takes a very broad approach to the whole subject of marketing.

## *HOME ECONOMICS*

In comparison with the agricultural agent, the work of the home demonstration agent is more standardized the nation over, the components of home life being similar everywhere. Since food is a necessity for every family, its selection and preparation to meet adequate nutritional requirements are a part of the local program in practically every county. Annual reports for the last few years show the agent teaching about or otherwise assisting in the improvement of food supplies and of diet, to an average of over 700 families per county. Work in food preparation, food preservation, freezing, or canning reached from 500 to 700 families per county. The school lunch program, now well organized on a national scale, was started by Extension home demonstration clubs years ago, and Extension still assists educationally and in planning. Home demonstration clubs helped over 21,000 rural schools in about 1,400 counties in equipping and operating lunchrooms.

Next to nutrition is clothing, which occupies another major part of the home demonstration work. Here the home demonstration worker is concerned with teaching women and girls how to achieve the maximum amount of good taste, utility, and attractiveness at minimum cost. Problems concerning selection, construction, renovation, and judgment of good line, color, and design are given consideration. Instruction in the care and use of the sewing machine is also given. High living costs, coupled with frequent style and fabric changes, greatly stimulated this work. Well over 800,000 families benefited from instruction in this area in 1947, an increase of more than 50 per cent in five years. In addition, more than half a million 4–H club girls were enrolled in sewing projects.

Home management directly related to family economy is the third aspect of home demonstration work. Here attention is given to consumer-buying problems; the use of timely economic

information affecting buying decisions; "making versus buying" decisions; time-management problems; and financial planning. In 1947 nearly half a million families used such information in making adjustments in family living and purchasing. Among the topics enthusiastically supported by both men and women were family business problems and practices and the descent of property by law and by will.

Home furnishing is the fourth component part of home demonstration work. Principal activities involved here are improved housekeeping methods; methods of repairing, remodeling, or refinishing furniture or furnishings; selection of house furnishings or equipment; house screening; improving room arrangement; home grounds, and the like. An analysis of changed practices in this area of instruction shows that from 100 to 200 families per county have acted on suggestions growing out of instruction in each of the subjects in this general area.

Family relationships have in recent years also entered into the program of Extension, with special attention to child development and parent education. This is but one of a number of illustrations of the tendency of rural people to turn to the Extension Service for assistance when they become conscious of a new field of concern and there is no other agency or organization meeting the felt need. In counties in which such a program has been initiated it has interested an average of about 150 women. About half the states have specialists in this area.

Home demonstration agents have also given attention to recreation and community service. These activities include aesthetic projects, such as art, textiles, pottery and basketry, on the individual self-expression basis; assistance in improving family recreation, a concern of over 150 families per county; such enterprises as beautifying highways, school grounds, and public parks, to the number of over 7,300; and constructing playgrounds. Furthermore, in the single year of 1947, more than 300 rest rooms were established and some 1,500 community houses were erected to serve as social and recreational centers.

## *WIDER HORIZONS*

The last two paragraphs provide illustrations of the enlarging scope of Extension teaching, as agents and people face their needs and plan what the program shall be. In the aggregate many and

highly varied activities have been undertaken in these newer areas of interest, some of which are suggested in the following pages.

### *Health*

In 1946 a Hospital Survey and Construction Act was passed by Congress. Extension was forthwith called upon to add to its previous teaching of better health habits information relating to the securing of hospitals. A number of states issued bulletins explaining the Act and showing how rural communities could take advantage of it. Twelve states have appointed health specialists. The people in one Midwestern state asked that Extension be designated to lead in organizing for rural health improvement. Seventeen state medical associations report that Extension was one of their chief aids in developing programs for more adequate medical care in rural areas. Beyond these activities, health and safety work has been conducted by Extension workers and local leaders in 34,000 different neighborhoods, one half the total number of localities in which Extension worked in 1947.

### *Libraries*

For many years Extension has cooperated closely with the agencies of public library service. One-third of the states reported activities in this field, one result of which was providing library facilities for 6,699 neighborhoods or communities in 813 counties during 1947.

### *Landlord-Tenant Relations*

Economists and sociologists have long discussed the problems of farm tenancy. In recent years several state commissions and one Presidential committee have studied the question and drawn up programs. Because of the sharecropper situation, the problem is generally recognized to be most serious in the South. The issues involved are highly controversial. In one county the assistant agricultural and assistant home demonstration agents were assigned to the task of studying the situation with both plantation owners and sharecroppers. Mutually agreeable solutions were found to some problems, resulting in increased production and better living standards. Another state provides 122 demonstrations of successful and mutually beneficial landlord-tenant arrangements. Better wage agreements and lease forms, worked out by

Photo by County Agent Bertram Tomlinson

Group learning to identify fruitworm miller

Farm management specialist discussing profit factors on dairy farms at a young farmers' club meeting (Windham County, Connecticut)

Courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture

the state colleges, are being studied by groups in a number of states.

*Discussion of Public Affairs*

As indicated in the previous chapter, this program was well established in a number of states before the 1940's. It is being continued and expanded. Concerned with such local or local-federal problems as farm credit, land utilization, school consolidation, it involves forums, institutes, and citizenship training schools for leaders. In Michigan, between November, 1948, and April, 1949, the Extension Service issued a series of outlines giving factual information and pro-and-con interpretations on such topics as "Is the Farm Program to Blame for High Food Prices?", "Are Hard Times Ahead for the Farmers?", "Does World Trade Help Michigan Farmers?", "Do Farmers Get a Fair Share of the Food Dollar?" There have been many discussions of the difficult problems of postwar international relations. Many home demonstration clubs have gone beyond discussion and have sent gift boxes to war-torn countries, conducted exchange programs with groups in a number of the British nations, Holland, and other countries, and contributed to the rehabilitation work of the Associated Country Women of the World. Groups have also studied the purposes and possibilities of the United Nations and of the Security Council, UNESCO, and FAO. Extension motion pictures on life in foreign countries have been in demand.

*Outlook*

Best established of all the activities in the economic and social realm has been Extension's use of the material and data coming from the annual conference held by the United States Department of Agriculture each fall, on the outlook for agriculture and rural life in the year ahead. A large amount of data is assembled and interpreted for this meeting. Extension attempts to relay this to rural people, with interpretations applicable to each state, as an aid to individual and community planning.

## *4–H CLUBS*

So far this chapter has been concerned largely with the rural adult education work of Extension, though more than once mention has been made of the achievements of the boys' and

girls' clubs, which now have almost two million members. No study of agricultural extension work in the United States can be complete unless it duly recognizes the educational values and significance of club work for farm boys and girls.

The programs of these clubs deal with agriculture and home economics. Members take various projects, such as raising a calf, growing an acre of some crop, making a dress or hat, or canning. There are also projects in health work and a variety of activities under the fourth H—heart—largely of a community service nature. The annual 4–H club camps, combining educational and recreational features, are also very popular.

Because these clubs have not been elsewhere described in this bulletin, they will be defined and their objectives listed here.

A 4–H club, simply defined, is an organization of boys and girls ten to twenty years of age with a definite program covering the production of farm and home products and personal and social development. It is part of the national agricultural extension system, and was organized by the United States Department of Agriculture in cooperation with state colleges of agriculture and county extension organizations.

*The Eight Distinctive Educational Objectives*

1. To help rural boys and girls to develop desirable ideals and standards for farming, homemaking, community life, and citizenship, and a sense of responsibility for their attainment.
2. To afford rural boys and girls technical instruction in farming and homemaking, that they may acquire skill and understanding in these fields and a clearer vision of agriculture as a basic industry, and of homemaking as a worthy occupation.
3. To provide rural boys and girls an opportunity to "learn by doing" through conducting certain farm and home enterprises, and demonstrating to others what they have learned.
4. To instill in the minds of rural young people an intelligent understanding and an appreciation of nature and of the environment in which they live.
5. To teach rural boys and girls the value of research, and to develop in them a scientific attitude toward the problems of the farm and the home.
6. To train rural boys and girls in cooperative action to the end that

they may increase their accomplishments and, through associated efforts, better assist in solving rural problems.

7. To develop in rural boys and girls habits of healthful living, to provide them with information and direction in the intelligent use of leisure, and to arouse in them worthy ambitions and a desire to continue to learn, in order that they may live fuller and richer lives.
8. To teach and to demonstrate to rural boys and girls methods designed to improve practices in agriculture and homemaking, to the end that farm incomes may be increased, standards of living improved, and the satisfactions of farm life enhanced.[2]

Parallel with these high objectives are three sets of principles or ideals developed to stimulate the whole program of 4–H clubs with ever-growing consciousness, on the part of club members, of the necessity of pressing forward for success and accomplishments: the National 4–H Club Creed, the 4–H Club Pledge, and the 4–H Club Motto.

*The National 4–H Club Creed*

I believe in 4–H Club work for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen.
I believe in the training of my HEAD for the power it will give me to think, to plan, and to reason.
I believe in the training of my HEART for the nobleness it will give me to become kind, sympathetic, and true.
I believe in the training of my HANDS for the dignity it will give me to be helpful, useful, and skillful.
I believe in the training of my HEALTH for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, to resist disease, and to work efficiently.
I believe in my country, my state, and my community, and in my responsibility for their development.
In all these things I believe, and I am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.

*The 4–H Club Pledge*

I Pledge
My Head to clearer thinking,
My Heart to greater loyalty,
My Hands to larger service, and
My Health to better living, for
My Club, my Community, and my Country.

[2] From A 4–H Club Information Card issued by Federal Extension Service (U. S. Government Printing Office, 8–7227).

*The 4–Club Motto*

"TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER"

*The 4–H Club Emblem*

In symbolizing the 4–H idea of head, heart, hand, and health, a four-leaf clover of green with the letter "H" in white on each leaf was designed for the 4–H emblem. The 4–H flag shows this emblem set in a white background. The meaning of the flag is described as follows: "The white background . . . symbolizes purity: the green of the 4–H emblem represents nature's most common color in the great out-of-doors and also is emblematic of youth, life, and growth."[3]

The various references to the 4–H clubs elsewhere in the text illustrate how these objectives and principles are worked out. As with all other Extension activities, these clubs are in no sense regimented into a single pattern. States and counties determine the program.

Our discussion now turns to the whole field of program planning in Extension, to the process by which the things reported earlier in this chapter happened.

## *PROGRAM PLANNING*

Even the brief glimpse this chapter has given of the myriad educational activities of the Extension Service should demonstrate that the United States Department of Agriculture has no directive power over programs. The leadership it exerts is wholly in terms of suggestion and advice. The only exception to this generalization occurs in time of great emergency, such as a war, when tasks assigned to the Service and supervised by the federal office may be obligatory for all states. The farm labor program during World War II and the assignment to investigate requests for draft deferment for farm laborers are two illustrations of such exceptions. Barring such contingencies, the very budget of the federal office evidences the desire of Congress to keep the control of the Extension program in the hands of the states. The Extension office receives barely 1½ per cent of the total funds expended, of which more than half goes for mandatory duties, such as allocating and

[3] USDA, *Organization of 4–H Club Work* (Miscellaneous Publication No. 320, October, 1938), p. 5.

auditing state finances, checking plans of work, and maintaining personnel and pension records, since Extension employees are in part federally paid, and for detailed operating services. In 1949, the balance available for educational service to the states was only a few hundred thousand dollars out of the nearly $66 million available to Extension in that year. This sum is not even adequate to provide all of the services the states request.

*State and Local Planning*[4]

When program planning is considered on the state level, the variety which is a characteristic of Extension in all phases immediately appears. A major point of difference among the states relates to the type of cooperation they extend to their counties. The latter cannot be completely independent in their program's determination since they are dependent upon the state for specialist assistance, bulletins, and other materials.

In large part both the content of the Extension program in any given state and the methods by which it is determined reflect the philosophy of Extension held by those responsible for leadership in these particulars. For whatever the written objectives of an organization, its philosophy is shown best in its operations and by the items in its objectives upon which it places most emphasis. It is necessary, therefore, to consider a few of the attitudes affecting program planning.

In the early days of Extension, the workers, from Dr. Knapp on, assumed that they knew what was needed in communities and on individual farms. The program was predetermined and taken to the farmer, who had nothing to say about it. Dr. Knapp himself came early to the conclusion that his objectives were best achieved by consultation with farmers, at least in terms of procedures to be employed. In a few states, however, some agents still claim that there is a tendency for the state office to formulate a program and make the counties like it.

To the degree to which this applies, it is a corrective to the tendency of local groups, given sole responsibility for planning, to develop programs so loaded with a variety of miscellaneous projects, each requested by only one or two communities, as to

[4] The material for this section comes from an examination of some hundreds of state and especially county plans of work and from correspondence with agents named by state leaders in 100 counties as having developed good program planning procedures.

be too cumbersome to handle effectively and too diffuse for educational benefit. There are, of course, other and sounder ways to correct such a situation. Democratic program determination must be within the limits of the resources available. It must also be in terms of the major needs of the county viewed as a whole.

Criticisms are also made, in and out of the Extension Service, that in some states Extension concentrates on teaching more efficient practices in agricultural production and marketing on a commodity basis, to the exclusion of all else. The issue here boils down to whether the job of Extension is primarily vocational or whether it is to consider the total needs of its constituent families. The former approach, tending to regard people as agents of production rather than as human beings, is a negation of the often-stated objectives of Extension. There appear to be two assumptions behind this attitude. One is that if major attention is given to the top 10 to 25 per cent of the population who produce half the food and fiber raised, the improved practices will somehow trickle down to the rank and file. This, of course, is to forget that the Smith-Lever Act opened the benefits of the Extension Service "to the people of the United States." The second assumption, that the achievement of maximum production will bring about the solution of most other problems, is not confirmed by the facts.[5]

In view of the history of Extension, it would be strange if such attitudes did not exist in some states and counties. They are not only an expression of the freedom of Extension to determine its own program, but also a clear indication of the directions in which Extension programs are tending.

Whatever the philosophy of Extension any given state or county may have, two clear trends in program planning have emerged. One is to allot to the people of the county a larger share of responsibility in determining the activities for a given year. The other is to make available to them the annual Outlook conference reports containing the judgment of economists and other social scientists as to the national and world facts and trends which may affect the local situation in the ensuing year. In other words, the people concerned are given the opportunity to check their own judgment as to what their county should have against the probable

[5] Cf. *Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals, op. cit.*, pp. 36–37.

effect of outside forces on what they would like to do. Local programs can no longer safely be drawn up only in the light of local conditions. The county is part of the state, nation, and world. Through Extension, farmers are learning that many of the problems with which they struggle have their origins outside the line fences of their farms.

One clear illustration of the operation of this process occurred during the war. Many farmers knew that the forced draft production was depleting their soil. On the basis of local needs, this would have required considerable attention to soil conservation. But when war and reconstruction needs were presented to them, farmers the nation over accepted the calculated risk embodied in the Department of Agriculture goals and broke all previous production records again and again.

Another insight into the range of interests covered and the variation among counties may be had from a mere listing of the topics under which county programs were summarized in two state reports: Farm Income, Farm Indebtedness, Land, Crop Production, Livestock Products, Forest Products, Buildings and Facilities, Marketing and Cooperatives, Transportation, Credit, Land Tenure, Farm Labor, Home Improvement, Rural Welfare.

Another state summary includes most of these headings, a number of them broken down in greater detail, and adds the following headings: Highways, Flood Control, Health, Housing, Nutrition, Education, The Family, The Community, Art and Recreation.

Not all of the county reports in one of these two states were as inclusive as these chapter headings. About two-fifths were couched pretty much in terms purely vocational or vocational and economic, but three-fifths were concerned with the whole of rural life.

Lest the reader imagine that it was state pressure that produced reports like this, headings from a county report from another state are added in order: Building Land, The Farm Business, Rural Electrification, Marketing, Processing, Transporting Farm Products, Farm to Market Roads, Greater Educational Opportunities Should Be Promoted, Rural Health Problems Serious, Church Should Be Supported, Capital Available. It is significant in this report that the only sections announcing the planning group's conclusions in the heading are those dealing with the social aspects of farm life. Even more interesting is the place

of the discussion on Capital, which flatly takes the point of view that capital must be invested in human beings as well as in land and stock, and that such capital will bring a return.

An analysis of Extension experience in program planning over its 35-year history suggests certain principles which, if followed, contribute to the success of the Service. The foremost of these is that programs should be planned with and not for the people concerned. Democratic procedure does not require, however, that programs be determined solely by the people. The agent cannot surrender the function and obligation of leadership. While he knows and works with the local people, he also represents the state college and the United States Department of Agriculture. In that capacity he is the channel through which knowledge of non-local factors affecting the local situation reaches the people. He must, if necessary, present his own analyses of what is needed. In such a give-and-take the agent helps develop a democratically functioning group and an educational program on which all or most will agree. Should real differences develop, if an agent cannot carry the group the decision must rest with the local people, for their participation is wholly voluntary. The importance of agent participation in program planning is clear from a number of surveys. There are indications that without forward-looking leadership and stimulation, farmers in some counties are so well satisfied with Extension that they would make no changes in procedures.[6] Certainly, if the same program is continued from one year to another, it should be by conscious action and not by default.

The second principle now well established by Extension experience is that local leadership is indispensable to the development and execution of an Extension program. This principle guarantees not only that Extension will reach the people through their own neighbors, but also that the professional staff will have access to the accumulated experience and knowledge of the local people. As one agent correspondent expressed it: "The annual program should be a composite of the problems of the county as expressed by the farmers and their wives and the findings of the Experiment Station on the problems of the county as interpreted by the agents." The role of local leaders is discussed in another chapter.

[6] Cf. C. R. Hoffer, *Social Organization in Relation to Extension Service in Eaton County, Michigan* (East Lansing: Michigan State College, August, 1946).

A third principle dictates that any educational program must be based upon facts. Facts refers here not only to content material presented in the conduct of a given program but also to a knowledge of the situation which justified the selection of any given activity and of the factors which should make it successful.

Again and again the letters received from county agents (referred to on page 103) declared that the key to adequate educational program planning was to "understand the local situation *and the people who operate within it.*" More than once it was stressed that even the observations of skilled agents are not sufficient to acquire this understanding. Said a very successful agent, many years in his county: "There must be a survey first, then education. Once the people, to the last man down the last road, understand community problems and the need for their solution the answer is forthcoming." "Without surveys and the subsequent planning," writes another agent, "we never would have reached the lower half of our population with their different needs." It was further maintained that this sort of preparation for the annual "plans of work" produced better integration between agricultural, home economics, and 4–H club work than any other device. It is a procedure which also "secures excellent farm and homemaker participation."

Some counties use both special-interest or commodity groups and the community approach as well. The result seems to confirm the belief that just because a man is interested in dairy herd improvement that is no reason why he should not also be interested in education in his community, young people, and comparable topics. In a few counties the planning has been done on an all-inclusive, county-wide basis with agricultural, business, commercial, health, and educational interests all cooperating with local government officials. In another county the social survey preceding the planning was done by the county agents, county health workers, and county librarian, each agency contributing sixty days of work time to the project.

The facts called for in such program planning take time to assemble, though many are available in census reports, and once gathered they can be kept up to date without great effort. And they are crucial, as the following cases, selected from many, show. The difference between the high and low county in the median number of years of school completed is 7.8 years in one Western state, 9.6 in a Southern state. Obviously, if the educational pro-

gram is to be successful it must use quite different methods in the low counties as compared with the high ones. Yet in the low Western county there were several hundred college graduates among the farm population.

In one state, a county study disclosed that while Extension was well regarded and reached a high proportion of the population, farmers under thirty-five years of age were proportionately conspicuously under-represented in Extension groups. In another, in a state-wide sampling study, half of the farmers in the 45–59 age group reported using the Extension Service compared with one-sixth in the under-30 group and almost a third in the 60 and over.[7] Again, in a single county in a so-called Farm Bureau state membership in the Bureau by township ranged from a low of 10 per cent to over 70 per cent. The pattern of participation in Extension activities is somewhat similar. Here studies have shown that closely knit rural neighborhoods, in which church and family ties are strong integrating factors, may be far less responsive to drives for Farm Bureau membership than other neighborhoods. While such findings do not answer the question as to how to improve the Extension Service's coverage, at least they locate the problem areas. Facts like these are indispensable in Extension organization and program planning.[8]

A fourth principle of present-day Extension work is that the program or any given unit of it should not only be useful, but also

[7] USDA, *The Extension Service in Vermont* (Washington, D. C.: July, 1947, mimeographed), Part I, p. 5.

[8] There are an increasing number of studies of the type here mentioned. One in North Carolina, by Paul Leagans, has as its objective: (*a*) To discover the kinds of subjects about which farm operators in North Carolina desire more information. (*b*) To discover the difference, if any, in the interest patterns of farm operators according to the following economic, social, and educational factors: Level-of-living status, formal educational attainment, tenure status, type of farm, race, age, size of family, size of farm, and amount of off-farm work by operators. (*c*) To develop instruments and procedures for discovering interests of farm operators that may have further usefulness in the Extension Service.

A somewhat comparable study, a county Extension appraisal, is under way in Spokane County, Washington, by C. A. Svinth, assisted by Laurel K. Sabrosky and the senior author of this bulletin. The purpose of the appraisal is to determine how efficiently and effectively the administrative organization, administrative procedures, and educational methods employed accomplish the objectives of the various phases of the county Extension program; how well the program meets the expressed or discoverable needs of the people; how adequately the Service works with its total potential constituency. Information is being obtained on socio-economic status, contacts with Extension, knowledge of Extension, adoption of practices, sources of information, recognized changes and needs of the farms, homes, and communities, and community-organizational activity.

of high interest in terms of a recognized problem, or, if in the technical field, profitable. If a change of practice is the objective, it must be one that is economically practical.

A fifth principle in program making is to recognize that, to be effective, the process requires time. It cannot be hurried. If there is to be good participation, the participants must be sure they want to do whatever is being considered. In agricultural projects involving the cycle of the crop year, this means that consideration of a given proposal must begin early enough so that the decision to adopt it and the subsequent teaching will coincide with the period of peak need for the information.

The sixth principle is closely allied to the previous one; namely, in teaching farmers new things, one should always hold the big idea foremost in their attention. Farmers today, unlike their predecessors, are caught by the onrush of modern life; ideas of different shades close in on them from every direction, clamoring for their attention and claiming their allegiance. The idea has to be big enough and good enough so that once launched it can hold its course.

Using local material for the planning and development of an extension program is the seventh principle to which Extension workers are urged to adhere. A farmer's life is largely circumscribed by his immediate problems. His interests are necessarily chiefly confined to his own locality, where he feels sure of what he can and should do. Any extension program which fails to use local materials, and to provide adequate ways and means for people to get needed supplies from their local resources, will fall flat. For instance, campaigns for raising clover and alfalfa in some states brought much success simply because efforts were first made to develop local sources of limestone which could be obtained cheaply and easily. A food-for-health campaign was successful only when whole-grain cereal foods and vegetables were properly provided in the local market. A "grow healthy chicks" campaign was greatly helped when farmers could obtain a supply of chicks from some nearby accredited disease-free flock.

An eighth principle, and one of paramount importance, is that any educational program must take the habits, customs, and culture of the people into account. This principle has already been stressed in this bulletin. It means that the teaching may have to be "psychological rather than logical." An agent from one of the Plains states, analyzing his situation in detail, remarked that

this principle of planning had enabled him to differentiate in his thinking and his work between the migrants from the East, accustomed to the humid conditions there, the foreign stock groups, and the native stock, all of whose cultural traits he was "both surprised and delighted to find influenced their agricultural practices." His delight was due to the added understanding such information gave him of both his county and his job. Another agent put it: "In counties Extension must be presented in terms of the types of (cultural) groups present if it is to be successful."

This last principle brings into bold relief the cardinal truth about the nature of cooperative Extension work: It is cooperative in the best sense of the word. It requires group action, group support, and community-wide awareness of the meaning and purpose of the proposed activities. An Extension program is for the whole community, men, women, boys, and girls. Farm business and home life, agricultural welfare and village and town welfare, are inextricably interwoven. It is of the utmost importance to remind those who are new in the field of Extension Service that farmers, homemakers, and farm youth should share equally in the planning and development of Extension projects. Standing together, they have everything to gain; divided, they may fall into inefficiency and self-imposed ignorance.

### *Organization for Program Planning*

The great diversity of conditions facing rural people and local Extension workers warrants emphasis upon the cooperative development of Extension programs in the manner described and indeed advocated in this chapter. This may be accomplished through any of the organizational structures described in Chapter 3. In other words, the county Extension council or executive committee, if one exists, can function as a planning body. Sometimes a special planning committee is organized. In considering this matter, the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals expressed no preference for any one procedure for effective program planning, but did urge that in any such effort every community be represented.[9]

One additional comment remains. Some Extension leaders differentiate between a "plan of work," using the technical phrase employed in connection with the annual reports, and program

[9] *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

planning in educational terms for a period of three or more years. If the situation has been analyzed thoroughly enough and if care is taken to watch for changes in the situation, this is at once a useful distinction and a worth-while procedure. It enables professional staff and local people to see each activity and each year's work in relation to long-term objectives and gives a sense of achievement and progress which builds morale and strengthens the whole effort.

It is often said, and correctly, that the work in the counties is the heart of Extension. More than two-thirds of the funds are spent there, over three-fourths if the cost of field supervision and service by the state be included. But it is also true that the heart of Extension success in the counties lies in the effectiveness with which the educational program is planned and carried out. How effective such work is is clearly related to methods of instruction. This is considered in the next chapter.

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# · 8 ·

# METHODS OF EXTENSION TEACHING

LIKE all adult education, extension teaching differs from classroom instruction. It grows directly out of the needs and interests of the people. It follows no rigid pattern or curriculum. Participation in its program is wholly voluntary. It holds its constituents only because of the value of what they receive. Yet almost any extension group will vary in age, educational experience, interests, intensity of need, and levels of living. There may also be differences in values and cultural backgrounds. Obviously the productivity of extension education is greatly influenced by the effectiveness of the teaching methods used and the skill with which the agent can fit these methods and the content material to the diverse interests and abilities of each group.

## *TYPES OF TEACHING METHODS*

The teaching methods can be grouped in three broad categories. These, as presented below, include not only methods in the usual educational sense of that word, but also the means by which the methods are employed. Thus, a lecture can be given to a meeting in a local hall or it can be a radio presentation.

The first group of teaching methods employs objective illustrations, such as charts and posters, exhibits, slide films, motion pictures, pageants and plays, and, most important, method and result demonstrations. The second group of methods is oral, and includes office calls, farm and home visits, meetings, radio talks, phonograph records, and even telephone calls. The third category includes such written and printed materials as bulletins and other publications, circular letters, correspondence, and news articles. These different means and methods are used interchangeably to accomplish the same purpose, i.e., to bring about some change in farming or in home or community living. No one method meets all needs.

## OBJECTIVE METHODS AND MEANS

Demonstration is the foundation stone of extension teaching. Its importance was early recognized by Dr. Seaman A. Knapp. When the Smith-Lever law was enacted this teaching method was specifically written into the act as a means of instruction. Demonstration is based on the "show me" idea. It presents a proved, improved practice in terms of a practical application to a specific situation. Based on the old adage "seeing is believing," it convinces people by what they see rather than by what they hear or read. There are two types of demonstrations, method and result.

### *Method Demonstration*

A method demonstration is one which shows the assembled group how to carry out a given practice. It may be conducted by either an Extension worker or a trained volunteer leader. It deals with actual techniques of farm or home practice, such as culling a poultry flock, pruning or grafting a tree, inoculating legume seed, canning vegetables, building a terrace, picking beans, mixing concrete, constructing a hog or chicken house.

The strong points of the method demonstration are the following:

1. It teaches skills effectively.
2. It motivates and stimulates action because seeing, hearing, discussion, and doing are employed.
3. It provides opportunity for developing leadership.
4. It builds confidence in the demonstrator, who is often the extension agent.
5. It promotes personal acquaintance between demonstrator and people.
6. It serves as a news-creating agency and therefore stimulates publicity.
7. It yields a high rate of "takes" to "exposures."
8. It accomplishes changes in practices at lost cost.[1]

However, this method also has certain limitations. It is not well adapted to all subject matter. Illustration by performance of a skill or technique is its chief contribution, but even this is

[1] USDA Extension Service, Division of Field Studies and Training, "Method Demonstration." USDA Extension Service Stencil 620, 1942, p. 1.

dependent upon the demonstrator's skill. A bungled demonstration is bad. It not only confuses the audience, it also suggests that the method has not been perfected. A method demonstration, too, is dependent on adequate facilities at the point where it is given. If only makeshift equipment is available, the demonstration may fail. Where equipment is lacking it is often better to employ another teaching method. Even where the equipment is present, the demonstration can have little effect if comparable equipment is not available or procurable in the community.

Some time before Pearl Harbor one of the authors observed an interesting illustration of this principle in Korea. The government was promoting poultry as a means of improving farm income, urging through demonstration and other means the construction of a chicken house that cost $22. This suggestion made no headway with the farmers, because the sum involved was from 50 to 100 per cent of the average annual farm income in the province concerned. When an agricultural missionary devised a far less imposing and efficient house which cost only 95 cents, a number of farmers began using this type, and the results were satisfactory.

This is just another illustration of the absolute necessity for the Extension worker to know his community.

A further limitation of the method demonstration is that it takes more time for preliminary preparation than almost any other teaching device.

This teaching method must of course be combined with oral presentation. As he goes along, the demonstrator must explain each step simply, clearly, and logically.

*Movable School.* An interesting adaptation of the method demonstration is the Movable School originated by the Negro unit of the Extension Service in Alabama, located at Tuskegee Institute. Because the proportion of Negro farmers having cars is low, it was realized that attendance at demonstrations would be relatively low unless the demonstrations were carried to the people. The agricultural and home demonstration agents therefore secured the cooperation of a farmer and his wife to use both their farm and home for an all-day school. These were promoted among the people within a reasonable walking distance of the selected location. The agents used one car, which carried the equipment for all demonstrations. Demonstrations were held on successive days in all neighborhoods of a community, for adults as

A sewing demonstration by farm demonstration agent

*Pictures by courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture*

Demonstrating the care and repair of sewing machines

well as 4–H club boys and girls. The event inevitably was social as well as educational, which was an added advantage. In one week, in five neighborhoods, from three to four agricultural and nine other demonstrations were given, as needed or requested by the local people, from among the following:

*For Men and Boys*

1. Selecting seed corn in the field
2. Selection and care of livestock
3. Selection and care of dairy cow
4. Banking sweet potatoes
5. Care of livestock
6. Cutting and building steps

*For Women Only*

1. Food selection and preparation
2. Making and using a fireless cooker
3. Care of poultry
4. Year-round garden
5. Rug and curtain making
6. Clothing
7. Use and care of milk in the home
8. Eradication of household pests
9. Soap making

*Health and Sanitation*

1. Bed making with and without patient in bed
2. Making and applying bandages
3. First aid
4. Making an improvised rubber sheet
5. Medicine cabinet
6. Sanitary drinking cups
7. Personal hygiene

This Movable School illustrates, both in its adaptation of the techniques used and in its content, how the Extension Service attempts to adjust its program and its approach to the circumstances of its constituency, in this case a low-income, small-cultivator, racial group. It should be noted that the demonstration used the farm and home of a neighbor of those who attended. It was therefore geared to conditions with which all were familiar. The teaching was immediately applicable to the participants' own resources. The program had variety, necessary in a day-long school in order to hold attention. It was well integrated. In the neighborhood in which the men were being instructed in the selection and care of a cow, note not dairy cows, the women were being taught the care and use of milk in the home. Both projects were part of the over-all effort to improve the diet and lift the level of living of these Negro farm people. Finally, the instruction was being given by members of the racial group concerned.

*Result Demonstration*

As the name implies, this teaching method demonstrates the results of a recommended practice, in comparison with a former practice, under actual existing conditions. Result demonstrations are conducted by a farmer, a homemaker, or a 4–H club member under the direct supervision of the Extension agent. Result demonstrations may be used to prove that the application of fertilizer will increase crop yields, that the underweight of certain children can be corrected through proper diet, that the use of certified seed is a good investment.

The principal values of the result demonstration are the following:

1. It furnishes a local proof of the desirability of establishing a recommended practice.
2. It is an effective method for introducing a new project.
3. It appeals to the eye and reaches the "show-me" type of individual.
4. It provides a good source of information for meetings, news items, pictures, radio talks, etc.
5. It furnishes cost data and other basic information of use in revising the program.
6. It yields a high rate of takes to exposures.
7. It aids in developing local leadership.
8. It establishes confidence in the agent and in extension work.[2]

As in the case of method demonstration, there is a considerable range of subject matter, such as marketing, nutrition, health, and so on, that can not be taught by result demonstration. Unless it is publicized by news items, pictures, and discussions at general meetings, the method fails of usefulness except to the immediate demonstrator and his family. In the nature of the case, this method takes time to produce the desired results, and this introduces hazards. A severe drought, for instance, could vitiate the results of a demonstration of an improved fertilizer. The demonstrator himself is of great importance. One who will not follow the new practice absolutely can ruin the effect. He should be conscious of his or her community responsibility for the successful completion of the demonstration. He should be willing to provide the necessary physical equipment, supplies, and such requisites

[2] Extension Studies and Teaching Section, Division of Cooperative Extension, "Adult Result Demonstration." USDA Extension Service Stencil 881, 1941, p. 1.

for teaching purposes as publicity, pictures, meetings, tours and personal inquiries.

*Exhibits*

Exhibits, if well done, are an effective teaching aid. They are frequently used at community, and especially county, fairs. Small exhibits may be prepared for group meetings. Some counties have a rotating series of small exhibits in the hall outside the county agent's office or in a general reception and waiting room. The federal Extension office and a number of the states are willing to supply certain material for exhibits, as well as suggestions for preparation and display. Some commercial concerns also furnish posters which can be used.

The subject matter which can be presented with material of this sort is infinite in scope. It can range all the way from pictures of matured plants grown in fertilized and unfertilized soil to charts and graphs depicting trends in commodity prices, perhaps compared with parity. Cartoon techniques are often employed to catch the interest of passers-by. Some research has been done on how to make exhibits, posters, and the like most effective. The essence of success is to use one, or at most a few, related ideas, to make each component part of the idea simple and clear, to avoid abstract ideas, and to so place the materials that they are well lighted and can be seen without effort.[3] Even though exhibits as such are rarely responsible for changing a home or farm practice, nevertheless they unquestionably implant ideas and rouse interest.

[3] One of the authors was once attracted by a large crowd at a fair in a Chinese market town. He found that the center of interest was a panel of pictures. The first showed a pile of manure outside the barn end of a Chinese house, with some flies buzzing around. The second showed a fly on the pile, the third a fly just leaving with a bit of the filth attached to one of his legs. The fourth picture depicted a smiling mother about to lift her baby boy to her breast, the fly on her nipple. Next the baby was contentedly nursing, the fly leaving without the speck of filth. The sixth picture showed the baby very sick. In the seventh picture the infant is being laid in a coffin. Finally, the funeral procession was shown. There were a few explanatory words on each panel.

There was constant conversation among the people who viewed these pictures. They moved on very slowly. Frequently one or another would point to some feature of a picture. Most of the crowd were illiterate, but their conversation showed they got the story. Now and then someone who could read would appear and pointing to the characters would read out loud to the crowd. Conversation then ceased until the reading was over, when it would break out again with renewed vigor. Often people would go back and look at each picture again.

*Filmstrips*

Filmstrips, the modern version of the old lantern slides, are commonly used to facilitate extension teaching. Projectors generally are of the tri-purpose type, i.e., they may be used for the projection of single- and double-frame filmstrips, and for 2 x 2-inch slides, either black and white or colored.

In the state Extension office provision is made to supply county workers with projectors and a collection of filmstrips. The United States Department of Agriculture maintains a file of about 400 filmstrips covering over a score of subjects. These are available to the states upon request.

Filmstrips serve well the teaching purpose of Extension, because they appeal to both ear and eye. Like lantern slides, filmstrips are now widely used in connection with lectures and talks, and are rapidly replacing the more cumbersome lantern slides.

*Motion Pictures*

The value of motion pictures in adult education in both general and extension teaching has long been established. The Department of Agriculture has been interested in this field for many years. Its films range from such well-known documentaries as "The River" and "The Plow That Broke the Plains," to simple shorts showing, for instance, the right and the wrong way to pick an apple. Documentaries can be used for a wide range of general topics and sometimes are followed by group discussion. Other types of films dealing with practices are almost as useful as demonstrations. They give the audience convincing proof of proper procedures, for they see it with their own eyes. Moreover, a film, unlike a demonstration, can be slowed down at crucial points or even repeated if the audience desires. But the average motion picture, especially if it does not have a sound track, is more effective if accompanied or followed by explanatory verbal comment. This also permits direct application to local conditions. Distributing literature on the topic of the film is also effective.

In addition to the film library of the United States Department of Agriculture, from which films may be purchased or borrowed, a number of states have their own libraries, from which loans are made to counties. Some even supply county offices with projectors.

Some county agents make very effective use of the camera, using both colored stills and motion pictures to record conditions, ac-

cepted practices, harvesting and packaging procedures, and the like. These have heightened interest when shown to local audiences because people and surroundings are recognized. They have also proved effective in interpreting local agricultural conditions to the non-farm population.[4]

### *Television*

It is quite evident that television will soon be added to the educational media Extension uses. In fact, a few states have begun experimentation in this field, as has the federal department. At present not many farmers have television sets, and programs are kept quite general. Eventually, however, demonstrations will probably be telecast, as well as 4–H field days and other community events. A receiving set in a central point accessible to the community might further enlarge the possibilities of this new device. Those who are at present in charge of the work in the Department of Agriculture believe that television is "the greatest medium for education and entertainment that has ever come along." Its social effects are bound to be significant.

## *ORAL METHODS OF EXTENSION TEACHING*

### *Farm and Home Visits*

Word-of-mouth instruction is the oldest form of education. In the early days of Extension it was much relied on, especially through the medium of farm and home visits. In these visits, amid wholly familiar settings, the agent could teach in terms of the actual situation. The give-and-take possible in such a situation developed good will, established confidence in the agents, and helped enlarge the influence of Extension as the suggestions given were passed on to neighbors by the recipients.

However, this individual counseling with respect to specific, detailed practices is very time-consuming. It might take years to visit every farm in a county just once. Furthermore, visits can and do sometimes degenerate into personal service by the agent. Now that Extension has won the confidence of the rural people,

[4] At least one of these agents, who has become very skillful in his photography and its educational uses, Mr. Bertram Tomlinson of Barnstable, Massachusetts, employed films like these to good purpose in recruiting farm labor from colleges during the war and in instructing them in their work.

too frequent use of this method restricts benefits to too limited a number of people.

However, farm and home visits are of very real value to Extension workers, giving them first-hand knowledge of actual conditions within the county and enabling them to know local leaders who can be enlisted in the work. So important are such visits considered that agents are required to report the number they make. For all agents this exceeds three and one-half million a year in the United States.

Under present conditions, however, these visits must be carefully planned. Some will be to local leaders, officers of community groups, or members of the county Extension council. Here the purpose will usually be organizational, though there are usually other incidental values. In addition, agents should plan farm visits so as to include all parts of their county, all income groups among their people, and all cultural or racial groups which may be present. Only in such a way can a complete cross-section view of the total situation be acquired.

Interestingly enough, the balanced farming program, which has been noted in several connections, relies heavily upon farm visits. The problem of cost in this program is met by individual farm contributions to the salary of the special agent employed for this work.

### *Office and Telephone Calls*

It may seem strange to some to include this heading under teaching methods. It must be remembered, however, that each personal call on an agent is stimulated by a specific need for information. The number of callers serves as a good barometer of the agent's influence; all told, agents receive about nine million callers a year. In the nature of the case, each caller comes in a receptive frame of mind. Teaching under such conditions can be direct and effective. In a study made in 1929, office calls ranked fifth in importance among twelve educational methods of producing changes in practices. Telephone calls asking for informational help can be similarly effective, though, surprisingly enough, when people are asked, they usually rate this form of spreading Extension information as least influential. The importance of office calls justifies the Service in making offices attractive, locating them as centrally as possible, and marking them clearly. It also suggests that, difficult as it admittedly is, and barring emergencies,

agents should announce and *keep* specified hours when they can be found in their offices.

*Meetings*

Meetings of various kinds have the distinct advantage of bringing the agent into personal contact with comparatively large numbers of farm men and women and provide an economical means of making high-quality programs practicable.

All agents of some experience are impressed with the considerable increase in the number of meetings in comparison with the early days of Extension or even the 1920's. One reason for this is the fact that two out of every three farm families now have automobiles and that rural roads have been greatly improved. Another reason lies in the enlarging program of Extension itself. A quarter of a century ago more meetings were concerned with method demonstrations than with any other subject. In some states there were more such meetings than all others combined. But when Extension began to teach about cooperation, to discuss public affairs, to help local people organize for health protection, to sponsor drama, art, and music groups, and so on, the number of gatherings increased enormously. Even though many of these meetings are in charge of local leaders and the agent may not be present, the aggregate is huge. The average agricultural agent attends over 200 meetings a year, the average home demonstration agent about 300. In many of these, educational and social features are combined.

Extension meetings have pioneered in some of the techniques used in adult education in these last years. Discussion, for example, was an early feature of such meetings. Especially on technical matters the audience possessed considerable experience and knowledge, and efforts were and are made to tap this resource. Lectures are still used and panel discussions[5] are frequent.

*Radio on the Farm or in Rural Communities*

Most farm and rural non-farm families now have radios, the proportions usually exceeding 90 per cent, though at any one time as many as a fifth of battery-powered sets may be out of order.

[5] A panel discussion is one in which a group of persons with knowledge of a given subject discuss it before an audience. Time is usually allowed for audience questions and participation before adjournment.

Rural people would miss radios very much if deprived of them. However, they are discriminating listeners. Three out of four report turning their radios off because they dislike a program; one in three do this often. This response is more frequent in areas where the choice of programs is not large. The farm group in one Midwest state with a strong liking for informational programs preferred that these be presented through interviews rather than talks, especially when concerned with agriculture and home economics. One-half the men and one-fourth of the women wanted information only, with no music. One-third of the men and two-thirds of the women asked for music as well.

In general farm listeners select the more "serious" programs, such as news and market reports, religious programs, farm talks, and "good," "classical," or "old-time" music. (The proportion of the farm group with preference for this type of music is almost double that of those preferring other entertainment.) Among the rural non-farm group, entertainment programs are far more popular. In both groups daytime serials—"soap operas"—are the most disliked programs. Classical music, despite the approval many gave it, also rates high on the list of dislikes, largely because of inability to understand it.

Educational status and cultural habits clearly affect listening habits both as to content and preferred time. A study in Pennsylvania showed that Pennsylvania-German farmers and their wives listed as among the twenty programs they most liked only one of the twenty leading programs reported by the commercial radio rating services. Work habits and other cultural factors also affect the amount of time spent in listening.[6] Such factors need to be regarded in Extension radio programs.

### *Radio in Extension Teaching*

The role played by radio in Extension teaching is becoming increasingly prominent. Approximately 300 radio stations now regularly broadcast Extension information. The Department of Agriculture is probably the largest of all users of radio. Through state Extension editors it sends out farm flashes to 582 radio stations. "Homemakers Chats" use approximately 300 stations. Perhaps the Department's best-known broadcast, which after

[6] Charles J. Bornman, *The Farmer's Behavior Toward the Radio.* To be published by the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, New York, in 1950.

many years it now no longer operates itself, is the National Farm and Home Hour. Every Saturday, on a national hook-up, this program brought up-to-the-minute technical and socio-economic facts to farmers and homemakers, as well as current information and policy discussions by national leaders. Music and other entertainment features, often featuring 4–H or adult musical or dramatic groups, were also used. During the recent war the radio was an invaluable aid in bringing farmers news of various war programs.

To illustrate radio work in the state, the state college in New York (at Cornell University) may be used as an example. Unlike some state colleges, it does not operate its own station but furnishes programs regularly to about forty stations. In an average year this has meant about 6,000 broadcasts, including talks, interviews, weather warnings, together with news and explanations of current developments in agriculture and results of research.

Many counties also use the radio regularly if there is a station within their boundaries. The 1947 annual report of the Extension Service noted that over 68,000 talks had been given in over 1,900 counties, an increase of about 50 per cent in five years. Among the topics listed by one county were Home Gardens, Farm Labor, Potatoes, Insect Control, Definition of a Farmer, Home Furnishings, 4–H Camp, Canning, Price Control—Yes or No. Another agent has for several years maintained a regular 15-minute broadcast on international affairs, usually from the farm viewpoint.

*Evaluating Radio Teaching*

Despite these developments state and county workers have been increasingly concerned with the question of how effective their radio programs were and interested in improving them. The Division of Field Studies and Training of the federal Extension office has therefore undertaken a number of studies in this area, usually in cooperation with a state. Some states have also made independent studies. Most of the recent studies have been made in the North and the West. The general picture which emerges from these studies is summarized in the following paragraphs.

Several states have measured the effect of their radio teaching by putting on courses in which listeners could enroll to receive additional material by mail. In New York's "Let's Make a Dress"

program, over 11,000 women enrolled, more than half of whom had never before participated in an extension program. More than 900 dresses were made by enrollees during the series of broadcasts. Hundreds of women reported that they planned to make dresses soon and to use their newly acquired sewing knowledge in other ways. Over 1,900 report blanks were mailed to the project leader. To stimulate interest and aid in the teaching, four special clothing bulletins were mailed, one at a time, to enrollees. More than 300 local leaders were encouraged to give assistance locally, and Extension agents were advised to explain the project to stores, P.T.A. groups, granges, and libraries. Circular letters, posters, and exhibits were used to give publicity to the radio series, and announcements were carried in the newspapers and on the radio.

Another state tested teaching methods in a project on the care and repair of hats by using three techniques: local project leader, leaflet, and radio; leader and leaflet; and radio and leaflet. Nearly 300 field interviews were held with participants at the conclusion of the project. While the data show that the understanding and performance of the radio-leaflet group surpassed that of the leader-leaflet group in practically all ways in which results were compared, a large majority of the women thought they learned more from the leader than from the radio or leaflet. Some of the women who attended may have done so because they attend regularly and not because they were especially interested in the hat project. All of the women in the radio-leaflet group showed a special interest in getting the hat information by the fact that they wrote for the leaflet. The results also showed that regardless of the method used, the more education the participant had the more effective the teaching. As it happened, the radio-leaflet group had had more education.[7]

## *PRINTED MATERIALS AND EXTENSION TEACHING*

Inducing farm people to adopt new practices may be accomplished either by showing them objective evidence through method and result demonstrations or by talking to them indi-

[7] Except for the work cited in footnote 6, this section is based on Extension Service Circular 457, by Lucinda Crile, entitled *Some Findings from Studies of Farm and Home Radio Programs* (Washington, D. C.: USDA, Cooperative Extension Work, February 1949, 15 pp., mimeographed).

vidually and in groups. In addition, there are printed materials, prepared for farm people to read, which contain the same information.

Printed materials used in Extension teaching are of three principal kinds, namely bulletins and circulars, news stories, and circular letters. Personal letters are also included in this category.

*Bulletins and Circulars*

Bulletins and circulars are utilized extensively by the United States Department of Agriculture, the experiment stations, and the Extension Services of different states. Printed or mimeographed materials contain information on results of research work which are useful to the farm people. These materials provide definite, accurate, and detailed accounts of research conducted in laboratories and experiment stations. They also report current practices followed by successful farmers in different parts of the country and of the world.

The advantage of providing bulletins and circulars lies in the fact that recommendations advocated in print carry weight. They are also in semi-permanent form and can conveniently be kept and referred to.

The total circulation of such bulletins is huge, running well over 30,000,000 a year. There are, however, great variations among the states: In a few it is as low as 100,000 a year; in a few it exceeds a million. There are various explanations for such marked differences. The population of the state, the number of crops it raises, and the number of specialists it employs account for some of the difference. Again some states promote their bulletins more vigorously than others. Since people must usually request bulletins in order to receive them, the amount of promotional effort affects circulation. Again the educational status of the population makes a difference. Thus the state with the lowest educational status among the farm population distributed only one-seventh as many bulletins as a New England state with an educational status at the national average, despite the fact that the former has ten times as many farmers as the latter. In one progressive state, which, however, has considerable minorities of three racial groups, the average farm and rural non-farm home requests a pamphlet every three weeks. In the leading state there are six requests per home each month.

All told, the average county agent distributes directly about

4,000 bulletins a year, his home demonstration colleague about 1,000 more. These figures of course take no account of the requests made directly to the state college. On the county level the effect of socio-educational conditions is very marked. In one county in which one-fourth of the farmers are from a rather recently arrived foreign-speaking group, most of whom are not functionally literate, the agent used only about 1,000 bulletins per year; less than one for each farm. He must adjust his whole teaching program to this situation.

Despite the evidence that the constituents of Extension do use these bulletins, the Service is by no means satisfied with them. The work in the federal office in testing bulletins for readability has already been noted. Workshops have been held to guide state editorial staffs in helping the individuals who write the bulletins. Length, format, make-up, the use of illustrations and color, and other devices have all been studied. Ten to twelve pages now appears to be close to the optimum length for a bulletin. Simplicity is the keynote. The authors must realize that they are writing for the people, not for professional colleagues. It must be remembered in this connection, however, that a farmer understands the ordinary technical words of his calling, so that revisions according to readability formulas must never be slavishly applied. For example, "fertilizer," though a four-syllable word, would present no difficulty to a functional literate, but "photosynthesis" probably would to a person of average educational status.

*News Stories*

Newspaper reading is an established habit among the farm people of the United States. Newspaper editors have fostered the development of Extension Service in both agriculture and home economics. They have been especially interested in boys' and girls' 4–H club work. Each state Extension Service has an editorial and news unit which supplies periodic releases to the press. In the counties, agents also prepare educational articles and timely information for local papers. Close to a million news stories or articles were published in 1948. The average county agent writes thirteen or fourteen news articles a month; the home demonstration agent ten or eleven.

The principles of a good Extension news article are the same as those in any other field. It must be timely, accurate, concise,

and simply told. If a basic story has come from the state office, it is the county agent's job to give it local application and "color."

*Circular Letters*

Circular letters are used by agents to announce meetings, arouse interest in exhibits, disseminate information, and the like. They are used to give timely information to those who may not participate in Extension activities. They cover a wide range of subject matter, and therefore may be filed for reference. Another advantage of circular letters is that they require a relatively small amount of agents' time and can serve as effective supplement and reinforcement to other teaching methods. The more carefully planned the letter, the better the results. The most successful letters deal with only one topic, and in short, clear sentences present the problem or situation, research findings or local information applicable, and suggest the necessary steps for the reader to take.

Circular letters can easily be made attractive by using illustrations, such as drawings, cuts, and color. Good drawings, diagrams, and cartoons may be used to illustrate points which the letter tries to describe in words. Colored paper may be used to lend distinctiveness, provided good paper and clear attractive tints are chosen. For example, New York State Extension Service uses a light green paper for the Alfalfagraph, a circular letter prepared for alfalfa growers; blue paper is used for circular letters to poultrymen, green for farmers interested in farm forestry, gray for fruit growers. In the county mentioned previously, in which one-fourth of the farmers were of recent foreign stock, a sketch of the product discussed in the letter is put either on the envelope or directly under the letterhead. It was found that if the farmer was concerned with strawberries, potatoes, or whatever was pictured, he saved the letter and had it read to him by his oldest school-attending child.

## *RELATIVE VALUES OF DIFFERENT METHODS*

In the vocational aspects of its educational program the immediate objective of Extension teaching is to influence the behavior of its constituents. Much of this teaching is presented as a suggestion based on research. If the suggestion is adopted, it means that a familiar way of doing something will be changed.

In Extension parlance, a changed practice will result from successful teaching. The number of changed practices is therefore one important criterion of good Extension work.

Very early in its history Extension began to study the number of changed practices which the people credited to one or another of the teaching methods to which they had been exposed. In 1928–1929 some 27,000 changed practices reported by over 8,700 non-selected farms in twelve states were examined from this point of view. Ten years later a similar study was made in eighteen areas which covered over 34,000 changed practices. The results follow:

Relative Influence of Methods Upon Adoption of Practices

| *Method* | *Percentage of Practices Influenced by Methods* *About 1929** | *1939*** |
|---|---|---|
| Indirect influence | 21.31 | 19.71 |
| Method demonstrations | 15.18 | 16.41 |
| General meetings | 13.80 | 13.92 |
| Farm or home visits | 12.34 | 12.53 |
| News stories | 10.27 | 9.70 |
| Office calls | 6.75 | 6.58 |
| Bulletins | 6.52 | 6.80 |
| Result demonstrations | 6.67 | 6.58 |
| Circular letters | 1.53 | 2.43 |
| Radio | 1.53 | 1.27 |
| Correspondence | 1.23 | 1.15 |
| Leader-training meetings | .92 | 1.03 |
| Extension schools | .77 | .76 |
| Exhibits | .61 | .56 |
| Telephone calls | .38 | .37 |
| Study courses | .15 | .15 |
| Posters | .04 | .04 |

* 27,032 practices, 8,738 farms, 12 states (M. C. Wilson, *Extension Methods and Their Relative Effectiveness*, Washington, D. C.: USDA Technical Bulletin No. 106, February, 1929).

** 34,330 practices, 18 areas (a recent study made by the Division of Field Studies and Training, USDA Extension Service).

As these figures show, there was little variation in the effectiveness of the various methods over the decade. This, as will be noted, was in large part the result of the simple research methods employed. The most significant item in both studies is the first-

place rank of indirect influence. This is a measure of the changes brought about largely as a result of the teaching, advice, or example of the local lay leaders who assist the professional staff in carrying out the Extension Service program.

It was quite apparent from this first study that the research should be pushed further. Was the proportion of changed practices resulting from each method worth the cost? For instance, farm and home visits accounted for slightly fewer changed practices than general meetings but were much more expensive. Result demonstrations took 17.2 per cent of the Extension budget but produced only 6.7 per cent of the changed practices. Leader training cost 4.6 per cent of the money, but indirect influence resulting from it accounted for one-fifth of the changed practices. Pursuing this line, H. J. Baker and M. C. Wilson discovered[8] that as of 1928–1929 the situation was as follows:

| *Type of Teaching* | *Share of Agents' Time* | *Share of Cost* | *Proportion of Changed Practices* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Objective methods | 42.43 | 36.42 | 22.46 |
| Oral methods | 35.00 | 33.78 | 35.57 |
| Written methods | 11.54 | 16.20 | 19.70 |
| Leader training and other | 11.03 | 13.60 | 22.23 |

On this basis Baker and Wilson worked out a ratio of practices to costs. News stories ranked first with a ratio of 2.79; circular letters were second, scoring 1.83, closely followed by general meetings, 1.72; office calls, 1.56; and bulletins, 1.40. Farm and home visits were in sixth place with a score of 1.13, method demonstrations next with 1.04, and result demonstrations a bad eighth with 0.47.

Results pointing in the same direction were secured in an intensive investigation in Michigan in 1945.[9] Reporting on sources of useful information about farming, three out of five farmers listed bulletins, four out of five articles in the local paper, but only one out of four mentioned demonstrations. Four out of five also referred to what has been called "indirect influence."

These results would not have pleased Dr. Seaman Knapp. Nor, it is safe to say, would they have been true in his day. But in the

[8] *Relative Costs of Extension Methods Which Influence Changes in Farm and Home Practices* (Washington, D. C.: USDA Technical Bulletin No. 125, June, 1929).

[9] Charles R. Hoffer, *Social Organization in Relation to Extension Service* (East Lansing: Michigan State College, August, 1946).

intervening years Extension had so demonstrated its value, so gained the confidence of its constituency that they would accept news stories and the advice of circular letters as they would not have done in 1909 or even in 1914. They themselves no longer needed to see a demonstration because they knew that what was written had been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the experiment station staff and extension specialist or it would never have been passed on. In other words, the situation had changed. It has changed further since 1929.

The research results given above are, of course, approximate. Farmers could forget which of several exposures to Extension teaching influenced a change of practice. Further, by mentioning just one they could discount the cumulative effect of other methods. It has now been established that five or six approaches are far more effective than one, and the actual increases in the proportions of the total population accepting a new practice with each added method have been plotted. The proportion of changed practices rises rapidly with each exposure up to the sixth. After that the increase is small.

*Social Factors*

It has become apparent that research into educational methods as such is not the whole story of why a given method succeeds or fails, why a given practice is or is not adopted. Hence policy based wholly on the implications of such research may not be appropriate in dealing with some situations and groups. The social situation in which a group finds itself conditions its response to a given method. It is a safe hypothesis that in a poverty-stricken area where there are few automobiles, general meetings take a lot of agent time and produce small attendance and few results. Such situations still call for farm visits. Nor will the best of bulletins assist a functionally illiterate adult. Such things are clear without research, but research along these lines, though fairly recent, has uncovered some useful facts and raised significant questions.

In a study[10] made in Maine in 1941 it was found that method demonstrations and bulletins together were responsible for over two-thirds of the changed practices in homemaking, with the former slightly more influential. When, however, the group was studied according to education, it was discovered that the more

[10] *Effectiveness of Extension Methods of Teaching Home Economics,* by Estelle Nason and Gladys Gallup (Orono: Maine Extension Bulletin 305, June, 1942).

Home demonstration agent gives baking demonstration on the use of flour grown and milled in the community

*Pictures by courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture*

Farm women demonstrate rebuilding and upholstering old furniture on craft day during the county farm women's camp (Marion County, West Virginia)

education a participant had had, the greater the degree of preference for bulletins over demonstrations. More than 90 per cent of homemakers with over eighth-grade education had been exposed to Extension and almost four-fifths of them had made practical use of it. The comparable figures for those with less than an eighth-grade education were 70 per cent and 48 per cent respectively. Comparable results have emerged from other studies.

Are the content and methods of Extension teaching beyond the abilities of many of those with less than average education? If the content were simplified, would Extension lose the better educated through lack of interest? Since the average educational status of rural America is rising, should the relative effectiveness and cost of Extension teaching methods be restudied? Do still other factors account for the results given?

Questions like these can only be answered by further research, but there is some evidence that the reply to the last one is in the affirmative. When the farms and homes of actual and potential constituents of Extension are distributed according to the class of land on which they are located, their level of living, income, and tenure, the more advantaged farmers and homemakers, measured in these terms as well as by educational status, are found to participate more frequently in Extension and get more out of such participation than those who score lower on such scales. Yet at the same time Extension *does* reach and *does* benefit persons on all social, educational, and economic levels, as every survey shows. Only the proportions influenced differ significantly. Clearly the survey results of more recent years have opened up a whole area of problems needing rather fundamental research. Through it not only should the methods of Extension be improved but the entire contribution of the Service enhanced.

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## EXTENSION PERSONNEL

The total professional personnel of the Extension Service numbers over 12,000 persons, of whom close to two-thirds are county workers. But these persons would be seriously handicapped in their work without the assistance of the volunteer local leaders who cooperate with them in many ways. The number of these in 1947 slightly exceeded a million.

This chapter considers the personnel of the Extension Service, its selection, qualifications, training, and professional status. It is chiefly concerned with the employed staff, but attention is also given to the volunteers.

The first agricultural agents were selected on the basis of successful practical farm experience and clear evidences of leadership. Enthusiasm and imagination were even more necessary in those days than they are now. The emergency created by the boll weevil in the South and that caused by World War I, with the large expansion in staff which it necessitated, resulted in the employment of many men who lacked college degrees. These men laid the foundations of today's Extension Service. Many of the early home demonstration agents were also practical housewives, or rural teachers who were employed during their vacations.

As time went on, a farm background and graduation from an agricultural college became prerequisites for the position of county agent. Home agents were also expected to have a Bachelor's degree from a recognized department of home economics, not necessarily in a land-grant college.

Thirty years ago the program of Extension was far simpler than it is today. In the nature of the case it was, as pointed out earlier, almost wholly a vocational program. Adult education as a professional field was unknown. Along with everything else it is, Extension can also be considered as a case study in the evolution of a profession within the broad area of adult education. One of the

results of this development, of the increased demands upon and the broadening philosophy of Extension, has been greatly increased attention to the problems of training Extension workers.

## *TYPES OF EXTENSION TRAINING*

This training may be considered in terms of pre-employment, apprentice or induction, and in-service training, in addition to which there is a growing interest in graduate work.

### *Pre-employment*

Up to about twenty years ago agricultural colleges were little concerned with any specific training for prospective agents on the undergraduate level. About that time some of them began to offer courses in such subjects as Extension history, organization, philosophy, and methods, open to juniors and seniors. It was suggested that interested students add to these subjects agricultural economics, rural sociology, psychology, journalism, and public speaking, in addition of course to technical subjects in agriculture and home economics. Not until the present postwar period did a few agricultural colleges institute a full-fledged major preparing for Extension work. This was stimulated by the expanded demand for workers, by an enhanced recognition of the needs and possibilities of the field, and by a Committee on the Training of Extension Personnel in the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.

One reason for the relatively slow development of an undergraduate major in this field lies in the rigidity of college curricula. The scope of Extension is potentially so broad that the training program must be flexible and yet provide for both integration and some degree of specialization. This means that the program must cut across normal departmental lines in order to utilize all the appropriate available resources of the training institution. The student is not allowed to accumulate enough points in any traditional major area to satisfy the college's requirements for graduation.

The Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals of the United States Department of Agriculture and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities recognized these principles, and its *Report* laid down nine goals for education to prepare Extension workers:

1. Basic grounding in the physical and social sciences of significance to life in rural America.
2. Familiarity with reliable sources of important information.
3. Understanding of the background, philosophy, objectives, policies, and organization of the extension system.
4. Skill in applying principles of psychology and education to extension teaching, supervision, and administration.
5. Ability to organize rural people and stimulate leadership among them.
6. Understanding of the processes by which rural people and extension workers in cooperation can analyze local problems, arrive at potentially sound solutions, and develop a county extension program.
7. Knowledge of the problems and procedures of adult and out-of-school youth education.
8. Skill in organizing, interpreting, and presenting basic economic, social, technical and scientific data, and their implications in rural life.
9. Understanding of the techniques and processes of evaluating the effectiveness of extension programs.[1]

This judgment of the Committee can be summarized by saying that the prospective Extension agent requires three types of courses:

1. The major subject-matter fields in agriculture or home economics and the basic natural sciences on which this subject matter is based.

2. Basic training in the social sciences, as these bear on newer program content and on cultural understanding and social and community organization.

3. Basic courses in education and adult education, including psychology and subjects dealing with Extension organization, history, philosophy, methods, and the like.

### *Apprentice Training*

Classroom work alone is not a completely adequate preparation for the informal teaching situations faced by an Extension worker. There is therefore a slowly increasing use of an apprentice period in which, in the three months between a student's junior and senior years, the prospective Extension worker serves as an assistant under an experienced county agent. To secure the best values for the student, such a period should be and usually is supervised both by the Extension Service and the student's ad-

[1] *Report* (Washington, D.C.: 1948), p. 44.

viser at the college. This device corresponds to the practice teaching required of prospective school teachers.

During the apprenticeship training period, the Extension supervisor usually makes three visits to the county where the trainee is assigned. At the beginning of the period, he visits the county to explain the training outline to the apprentice and the county agents. The second visit occurs during the middle of the period when he discusses with the trainee and the agents the work being done. On the last visit, at the close of the training period, the progress of the apprentice is examined by the supervisor and the local agents who assisted with the training, and the aptitude of the trainee for Extension work is carefully evaluated.

### *Induction Training*

Induction training for new employees is becoming increasingly important, though some states still give only a few days of such work before placing a worker in a county. They depend rather on closer attention from the agent's supervisor than is given to an experienced agent.

The emerging pattern of induction training is to place the worker under an experienced agent to serve as assistant agent. Some states have designated certain counties as training counties, and both agents and local people understand this responsibility. The period of such training varies among the states up to half a year but averages three or four months.

This training must supply the gaps in the academic preparation of the new employee. Since it is on-the-job training, principles and application are closely linked and are in terms of a concrete situation faced day after day. The trainer agent must not neglect any important aspect of the work, from office procedure, records, and reports to the analysis of the problems of rural people and the processes by which agents and people cooperatively develop a program to meet, and if possible solve, these problems. The new agent must needs do some teaching, applying what he has learned of adult psychology and Extension teaching methods. He must absorb and learn to use a knowledge of the traditions and cultural backgrounds of the people. He must attempt, if possible, to organize some community for group action and to help train the local leaders selected. He must learn to know the county, its people and their life, and other organizations which serve them, in order that Extension may coordinate its efforts with those of

others. Finally, if time permits, he must learn how to evaluate the success or failure of his work.

Such a period of induction training should begin with a minimum of a week in the state office, under the person who will be the new agent's supervisor. The period should be used to acquaint the employee with the administrative structure of Extension and how it operates, particularly with reference to the counties. He should also meet the specialists and learn the assistance they are able to render to counties when called upon. He should gain a glimpse of the research work under way at the college experiment station, particularly such research work as may have immediate implications for his prospective county. Either at the state office or on arrival in his training county, he should study recent annual reports.

Any plan of induction training should be flexible enough to fit the needs of each trainee. One who has had an undergraduate major in Extension, including a summer apprentice period, will need a different type of induction training than one lacking such experience, and quite probably a shorter one. County agents are overwhelmingly in favor of induction training.

### *The Supervisor in the Training Program*

When a new agent is ready to assume responsibility for a county, the supervisor introduces him to county officials, newspaper and business people, workers in other agricultural agencies operating in the county, and other local leaders. The supervisor also assists the new agent to obtain a general picture of the county program and the duties which he or she is expected to perform, goes over with him all office matters—reports, files, mailing lists, use of stenographers, office equipment, office management and relationships. Help is given to the new agent in planning his or her schedule for about a month. These services rendered by the supervisor in the field give the new agent the feeling of security so necessary when one takes on a new job.

Some states also have a special conference for new agents, perhaps for a day preceding the annual conference of the entire Extension staff. In this setting these new employees may freely raise and discuss with supervisors and with administrators the problems that have arisen in the early period of their work as county agents.

*In-Service Training*

The rapid advances in knowledge as a result of research and the expanding educational program of Extension alike make in-service training an imperative activity. The aim of such training is therefore not only to increase the employee's proficiency but to keep him up to date as to content and method. Extension is an adult education agency which takes large quantities of its own medicine.

Some of this in-service training takes place regularly under the administrative procedures described in another chapter. The regular visits of the supervisors to county offices or to conferences of the agents in a given district offer the opportunity. The visits of specialists to a county in connection with specific assignments also contribute to this end.

In addition to these routine activities there are certain formalized experiences which contribute to in-service training. One of these is the annual conference which brings together the whole staff, usually at the state college, for three to five days. These conferences usually combine reviews of current developments in operations and research with general meetings on the broader aspects of Extension. Thus one state staff recently spent two days considering international affairs and their implications for rural life, and an equal amount of time on new developments in methods and in the various subject-matter areas.

A second device is the two- or three-day school or institute. These are usually held with respect to new or possibly emergency programs and are fairly broad in scope. Thus during World War II several states had schools devoted wholly to the war programs and Extension's responsibilities in regard to them.

*Workshops*

In the last few years, Extension has made considerable use of workshops. Typically these are held for two or occasionally three weeks. They bring together for a period of intensive work persons having a specific function. Thus there have been workshops for Extension administrators, for state leaders, for supervisors, for specialists, for editors, for visual education workers, and for those engaged in Extension research and evaluation. A few have carried academic credit if the participants desired it. Usually, though not always, they are regional in scope. They have been

held at a number of colleges of agriculture, at two private universities, and in the Department of Agriculture. The scope of these workshops is always determined in cooperation with the participants, whose actual operational problems figure prominently in the content. Opportunity is given for those attending to confer freely with the resident staff of the sponsoring institution who are regularly concerned with the subject matter of the workshop.

*Clinics*

There are also so-called clinics. Like the institutes, these run only a few days, but unlike them they are organized around a single work activity of major importance to all participants.

*Summer Schools*

A number of institutions now offer in their regular summer schools courses for Extension workers dealing with content subjects which Extension workers themselves teach and with the history, philosophy, methods, and program of the Extension Service itself.

*Graduate Work*

Recognition of the need for additional professional training for Extension workers has grown very gradually within the Extension Service. Now quite generally admitted, it is also ceaselessly promoted by the federal office.

One reason for the earlier lack of emphasis upon graduate work lies in the general character of the Extension worker's job, which causes more difficulty on the graduate level than on the undergraduate, as discussed above. Graduate work has traditionally tended toward specialization. The Extension worker's job, especially that of the county agents, is general in character. Graduate schools originally were puzzled as to how to develop a curriculum under these circumstances.[2] Fortunately, as with undergraduates, this problem is slowly being met.

By 1937 about one-third of the county agents expressed the opinion that graduate work was of "much importance" for Exten-

[2] There is one exception to this generalization. As early as 1926 Teachers College, Columbia University, tried to meet the need of Extension personnel for graduate training. Since then over 800 students from Extension have taken degrees there.

sion workers.[3] In 1930 Cornell offered graduate work for this group at its summer session. By 1937 nine state colleges and Tuskegee Institute offered summer courses of from three to eight weeks. Other states cooperated in regional summer schools. By the summer of 1948 between 4 and 5 per cent of the total Extension staff was in attendance at such courses. Referring to this development, the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals of the United States Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities expressed doubts as to a program built so largely on short summer courses. It stated: "... evidence points to the conclusion that graduate work for relatively short periods is not proportionally as beneficial as the more extended periods of study. Efforts should be made to provide leave to extension workers for graduate study on a quarter or semester basis."[4] Today graduate work specifically designed for employees of the Extension Service is offered throughout the academic year by seven land-grant colleges, three private universities, and the Graduate School of the Department of Agriculture. Enrollments would be larger but for the fact that too few of the states grant their Extension staff sabbatical leave for professional improvement. The Joint Committee urged strongly that arrangements be made to do this. The federal office also advocates this policy and is ready to pay a proportionate share of the salary of a worker on leave for graduate study. As of 1949, twenty states grant sabbatical leave to members of the state staff and seventeen grant it to county workers. Nineteen more make special arrangements for state personnel to take leave on pay for professional improvement if the circumstances warrant it. The same privilege is open to county workers in seventeen states. Regularly recurring leave on pay is therefore available in only slightly more than one-third of the states.

[3] In the following year 34 per cent of the agricultural and 43 per cent of the home demonstration agents reported having had an average of seven-tenths of a year of graduate work. This includes the approximately 8 per cent who had earned a Master's degree. All but about one per cent reported undergraduate work. Only 8.4 per cent of the agricultural and 4–H club agents and 9.6 per cent of the home demonstration agents lacked Bachelor's degrees. The proportion with Bachelor's or Master's degrees, or with some progress toward the latter, would be higher today.

[4] *Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals.* U. S. Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 46.

## *ATTITUDE OF EXTENSION WORKERS TOWARD GRADUATE WORK*

It has already been noted that a survey made in 1938 showed that a large minority of the county Extension staff regarded graduate work as of considerable importance. About half the staff thought it had some importance. If this study could be repeated today, the proportion placing weight on further training would unquestionably be much higher.

It is interesting to note what subjects these agents with some practical experience felt then should have had more emphasis in their training. The social sciences rank very high in this scoring. More than 60 per cent of the agricultural agents desired more work in economics, including agricultural economics, half of whom gave it top priority. Technical agriculture ranked second; and sociology, including rural sociology, third, with over two-fifths listing it. Sociology headed the list of subjects in which both home demonstration and 4–H agents wished they had taken more work, nearly three-fifths listing it. Technical home economics was in second place for the home demonstration agents, nearly half mentioning it. Courses in education and psychology ranked third, with 40 per cent choosing it. An equal proportion of agricultural agents also listed this area.

When asked to indicate the subjects of greatest importance from the standpoint of additional work desired, technical subjects ranked first by a narrow margin, with economics second for the county agents and sociology, including rural sociology, second for the home demonstration and 4–H club agents. If one groups the scores for all social sciences and education, these areas were selected by almost twice as many agents as those listing technical subjects.[5]

This trend was also evident among the subject-matter specialists. In response to the query as to what subjects should have received greater emphasis in their training, agricultural specialists rated economics first, education and psychology second, and English and journalism tied with technical agriculture for third place, with sociology close behind. Comparably, among the home eco-

[5] M. C. Wilson and Lucinda Crile, *Preparation and Training of Extension Workers: 1938* (Washington, D. C.: USDA, Extension Service Circular 295, November, 1938).

nomics specialists practically two-thirds placed sociology first, economics second, education and psychology third, English and journalism fourth. All of these were mentioned by at least half of those reporting. Technical home economics was listed by only 38 per cent.[6] Even when weights were given to first, second, and third choices, sociology remained in first place, with technical subjects second and the others close behind.

It is unfortunate that this 1938 study has never been repeated. There are nearly twice as many employees in Extension today as there were then, and the proportion with less than ten years' experience is far larger.[7] But even though it is over a decade old, this study is significant. It reflects clearly the constantly changing and expanding program of the Extension Service. The detailed tables of the study make quite clear that the staff of 1938 valued highly the technical subject-matter courses they had received. They show equally that the expanding program had convinced these workers of the need for more content in the new areas and for more professionalized courses.

The explanation of these results goes beyond the one just offered. The educational program of Extension expanded because the rural people demanded that it should. That demand came because the broad social situation changed rapidly during the 1920's and especially the 1930's. It has changed more since then. Clearly the staff recognized this in 1938. The emphasis upon further training and the response to it, described earlier in this chapter, show that this recognition is stronger today than then. Grown too is the consciousness that Extension is a distinct profession within the wide field of adult education. Perhaps all adult educators deserve the term missionary, so often applied in praise to the early Extension workers. Certainly the service motive must be present in any Extension worker's character. But growing

[6] Lucinda Crile, *Preparation and Training of State Extension Subject-Matter Specialists: 1938* (Washington, D. C.: USDA, Extension Service Circular 371, November, 1941).

[7] In 1946 a questionnaire study of the staff of one Midwestern state was made. It is unfortunately not wholly comparable. The subject-matter courses taken were considered and evaluated within groups; and as the author points out, very few agents had had opportunity to take training when in college in "several of the areas classified as professional in this study" since "they were not [then] available." He reports: "There was a great demand indicated, however, for additional training in Extension methods, administration and organization, adult education, program planning. . . ."—From a two-page mimeographed summary of "Education for County Extension Workers in Iowa," by John M. Holcomb.

professional consciousness and pride are also and happily evident today and play their part in staff training and attitudes toward it.

## *PROFESSIONAL STATUS*

One evidence of this growing professionalization of Extension lies in a growing concern for status within the college of agriculture structure. There have been times and institutions in which the Extension Service was considered as a somewhat important—because wealthy—stepchild, otherwise neither too welcome nor too respectable. That attitude has largely disappeared, but it still exerts influence among some Extension personnel. For the dual purpose of offering some incentive to Extension workers and of dignifying their position in the college of agriculture and before the public, some states have conferred traditional academic rank on Extension workers: instructor, assistant professor, and so on. The difficulty here is that many workers cannot meet the academic requirement of a Doctor's degree for any professorship designation. To grant it therefore solves one problem but raises another. To meet this a few other states have adopted various designations for county workers which differ from academic titles but imply comparable ranks. In Iowa, for instance, the county agent is known as county Extension director.

The Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals of the United States Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, in discussing these issues, raised several other points that are of importance. It stated:

> Public recognition of the fact that county extension workers are staff members of the land-grant colleges is facilitated through paying the salaries of such workers from funds of Federal and State origin. If all salaries could be paid from such funds it might tend to dispel the idea that county workers are strictly county employees, or, what is still more questionable, the employees of some farm organization, with the college merely subsidizing the effort. Paying all county-worker salaries from funds of Federal and State origin would make it easier to improve their status in regard to promotion, retirement, and other rights and privileges. This arrangement would sacrifice little in the way of local control and local responsibility, as workers unacceptable to the county authorities could be removed or rejected through agreement with the State director or, as a last resort, through the county refusing to pay operating expenses.

Another incentive of some significance is that of giving college rank (instructor, assistant professor, etc.) to county extension workers, as is practiced by a few States. Some other States have adopted a system of designations for county workers which differ from the academic titles but which imply a similar degree of attainment. It would appear to be highly desirable either to grant college rank or to adopt on a Nationwide basis some way of designating status comparable with that of the resident college faculty.

Of much greater importance than rank is a regular system of promotion which sets up standards for evaluating the accomplishments of a worker with promotion in line with achievement. Such a system furnishes a definite incentive to the worker. An equitable system of promotions, furthermore, will attract new people to the extension service. Several States have developed such rating devices with associated definite salary promotions that are accomplishing the desired results.[8]

## *LAY LEADERSHIP*

Attention has already been drawn to the lay leadership utilized by the county agents. Exceeding a million persons in 1947, this staff of unpaid helpers averages over 300 per county, over 100 for every agent and assistant agent. In the aggregate they contribute close to *ten million days a year* to Extension. Valued only at day labor rates, this is a contribution in excess of the total federal grants to the states.

Some of these leaders, as noted in another chapter, are concerned with organizational matters, but a large majority, especially those in women's and young people's work, participate in the educational program as demonstrators or instructors of small local groups.

It is certain that in an average case the agent concerned could probably offer better instruction than the local leader. But the present professional personnel in any given county could not begin to attend all meetings of all local groups. Without the use of leaders, the program of Extension would therefore be sharply restricted. It must not be forgotten that the influence of these leaders is considerable. The number of practices changed is an indication of this. The leader and the group members pass information on to others also. It will be recalled that Extension studies of the effectiveness of various teaching methods showed

[8] *Op. cit.*, pp. 46–47.

that such indirect influences often led all others and were always high on the list. Moreover, Extension efforts are put forth to make these local leaders as effective as possible. Those for any given subject attend a training conference lasting a day or two, in charge of the appropriate state specialist, assisted by the local agent or agents. Teaching materials are supplied and explained. If a demonstration is involved, one is given by the specialist and each step is slowly and carefully explained. Additional literature is sent to each instructional leader during the course of the program. The local agent visits the group at times and keeps in touch with the leaders by home visits and circular letters. Any leader can of course reach the agent with any specific problem that may arise. The average home demonstration agent spends more than fourteen hours a week in teaching; about four hours of this time is given directly to instructional leaders. The older the agent is in the service, the more time she gives to teaching.[9]

Many of the leaders now cooperating with Extension are persons with college training. The number of these in rural America is increasing. A significant number of leaders are former schoolteachers or former Extension agents. Again, this is chiefly true of the women's and 4–H club work.

The proportion of college-trained persons may vary among the counties in a state by as much as four- or five-fold. These variations and indeed the educational status of the population in any county must be taken into account in judging an agent's ability to secure competent leaders, and in training these leaders for their own teaching activities.

A number of studies have been made of the problems of local leadership. One finding which stands out and is of great importance is the fact that the leader must be a member of the group led, preferably selected by them rather than by the agent.[10] Again, older leaders tend to be more successful in teaching technical skill or operations, younger ones in handling some of the

[9] Mary L. Collings, *The Home Demonstration Agent's Use of Time* (Washington, D. C.: USDA, Extension Service, June, 1947). Unfortunately no similar job analysis has yet been made of the agricultural agents.

[10] One of the authors was with a new county agent who had arranged for a demonstration on a very successful farm. The operator's wife had prepared refreshments for 50 persons. Three came. Back in town the agent met three farmers who had not attended, though they worked closely with Extension. One of them finally told the agent why this farmer and his wife would probably never be accepted by the community. They continually flouted one of its basic cultural values.

newer and less tangible subject matter. It also appears that among others there are two reasons why Extension has been so successful in enlisting local leaders. The leader himself, because of the training and other aids received, gets more out of a given project than anyone else. Such service is also very much in line with the rural cultural value of being helpful to neighbors. Doubtless the enjoyment of teaching, of leadership, and of the prestige involved are also motives. Again, findings like these and others enter into the choice and training of the lay staff.

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A 4-H club cooking demonstration

*Pictures by courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture*

County agent gives poultry demonstration to 4-H poultry club (Florida)

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# EVALUATING EXTENSION TODAY AND TOMORROW

THIS bulletin has described the history, organization, and functioning of the Cooperative Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service in the United States. Indicating many things which the Extension Service has done, it has neither questioned the value of those things nor raised any issues as to whether the programs adopted have been the best programs under existing circumstances. In short, the task of evaluation or appraisal remains.

## *THE BASES FOR APPRAISAL*

The appraisal of any institution must be done in the first instance in terms of its objectives. Only then is it proper to ask whether these objectives have been the proper ones in the light of the needs of the society in which the institution existed. It is then proper to inquire if the institution under review has any contribution to make to other institutions or other societies. Finally, questions as to the future may be explored.

The basic core of Extension work today as in the past is the improvement of farm and home life, of rural incomes and levels of living, through increasing the technical and social knowledge of rural people. The goal of Extension is the maximum development of all resources, in the nation and in each county, economic and social, human and inanimate, for the achievement of the highest level of life possible.

Extension makes much use of the word "objective." The objective of one educational program may be a doubling of the number of farmers using disease-resistant seed, or of the number of homemakers buying or making "enriched" bread, or any of thousands of similar ends. But Extension workers appreciate, today perhaps more than at any other time in the 35-year history of Extension Service, that the objectives of these disparate projects

blend into the more fundamental goal already stated. That goal can be attained, as the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies and Goals[1] stated, through "the development of people themselves to the end that they, through their own initiative, may effectively identify and solve the various problems directly affecting their welfare."

There is unfortunately always a danger, as the Joint Committee has pointed out:

> That danger is that extension workers may tend to confuse immediate and rather short-run aims and accomplishments with the ultimate and more important over-all objective. This danger is accentuated by the close association of extension with other governmentally and privately supported efforts directed to encouraging quite specific actions by those with whom extension works. These circumstances should not be allowed to divert extension workers from their broad objectives of acting as an integrating force—helping rural people through education in solving the many interrelated and continually expanding problems which affect their lives. Toward that end extension should consciously and unfalteringly direct its total resources.[2]

The responsibility of Extension is to the people of the United States, particularly with reference to "subjects relating to agriculture and home economics." This is a broad charter. The obligation of the United States Department of Agriculture and of the Extension Service is all-inclusive, irrespective of residence, age, sex, race, creed, economic or social status, or group affiliations. Agricultural interests presumably would interest only farmers and gardeners, but home economics is a concern of all who operate homes of their own. In practice, with the Service being administered at the colleges of agriculture and with a small home economics staff, that work also for many years was largely with farm people.

## *WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS*

On the basis of available records, it would appear that Extension has done reasonably well in meeting its responsibilities. In 1947, the latest year for which data are available, over 3.8 million

[1] *Joint Committee Report on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals.* U. S. Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1948), pp. 23–24.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

farms changed one or more agricultural practices as a result of Extension teaching. This represents just about two out of every three farms, as reported by the 1945 Census of Agriculture. About two million farm homes also reported changing home economics practices. One reason for this difference is of course that for every ten counties having an agricultural agent, only seven have a home demonstration agent. On the other hand, non-farm homes which changed home economics practices exceeded one million, and an equal number of non-farm homes reported changes in agricultural practices. This last figure is 57 per cent lower than in 1943. The decrease, however, is clearly associated with the end of the war and the very great decline in the number of home gardens operated by non-farm people.

The data concern only those who have applied the teachings of Extension. They do not include the number who were exposed to such instruction and did nothing about it, nor the number who attended Extension meetings for the discussion of matters which could not be recorded in terms of changed practices. That the influence of Extension in this respect is growing would appear from the data on attendance at meetings it conducted. This increased to well over 53 million in 1948 for meetings conducted by agents, from less than 45 million ten years earlier, or more than 17 per cent. Compared with the war years, when fewer meetings could be held, the gain in attendance is better than 55 per cent over 1943 and about 50 per cent over 1945. Attendance at meetings conducted only by leaders, which exceeded 11.0 million in 1948, is more than 20 per cent above the low figure of the war years but is not yet back to prewar. All told, the Extension Service estimates, on the basis of annual reports from all agents, that it reaches annually from 80 to 85 per cent of the farm families of the United States. Credibility is lent to this estimate by the records of the 52,870 organized home demonstration clubs. Their membership, now at a peak, is almost one and one-fourth million, but the families known to have been influenced are about three times that number. Total enrollment in 4–H clubs in 1947 also reached an all-time high of over one and three-fourths million.

Though these over-all national figures are impressive, the question remains as to whether they represent a response only from the more advantaged farm groups, such as owner operators, large-scale farmers, or members of the white race. This is a criticism which has often been made of Extension.

In 1938, Dr. Carl C. Taylor of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Welfare of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, made an extensive study on a county-by-county basis of disadvantaged classes in American agriculture. He used such criteria as the percentage of farm families with gross income of $600 or less, percentage of farmers on poor land, on relief or rehabilitation rolls, and with low standards of living, defined in terms of five measurable items available through either the Census of Agriculture or the Census of Housing.

Comparing the annual reports for those counties defined as "disadvantaged" in the Taylor studies with those of other counties in the same geographic regions, it developed that in the estimated percentage of farm families influenced, the ratio of rural families to membership in home demonstration clubs, and the percentage of boys and girls reached through 4–H club work, Extension showed a slightly higher level of achievement in the disadvantaged counties. When those two groups of counties are compared with respect to per capita or per farm expenditures, the more prosperous Northeastern and Western states, which had almost no disadvantaged counties, showed higher allotments. This is because these states supply far more than the minimum funds needed to match and therefore secure the federal appropriations. By and large, the areas where the federal government bears one-half to two-thirds of the total cost of Extension corresponded closely to the defined disadvantaged areas.[3]

Two specific illustrations may be given of Extension coverage among extremely disadvantaged low-income families. In three South Carolina counties, in 1938, 78 per cent of the farm families reported net income for family living of $250 or less. A study of these counties disclosed that 65 per cent of all farm homemakers were influenced by Extension to adopt improved practices. In the unlikely event that Extension had so influenced *every* family with an income above that given, it would still have been reaching over half of the lowest income group.

In 1940, in view of the serious surplus of cotton, a campaign was conducted to get rural people to make cotton mattresses. For those in the lowest income categories, the Surplus Commodity Corporation furnished the cotton free. Extension conducted the

[3] See chapter bibliography for references.

classes in mattress construction. In one large Southern state, over 153,000 families were eligible for mattresses. They had an average income of $206.70. A check revealed that 43 per cent of this group, white and Negro, were represented in home demonstration club enrollment.

Even these data do not answer the question of what happens within the county. Does discrimination of any sort occur there? Over the years a number of studies have approached this problem in different ways. The families interviewed in one of the studies reported in Chapter 9 showed the following proportions of various groups directly influenced by Extension in sixteen states:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Owner operator families | 81% | Tenant operator families | 77% |
| Large farms | 85% | Small farms | 74% |

A study of 35,000 farm families in twenty-two Nebraska counties, in 1938, showed the following proportions "reached in some measurable way":

| | |
|---|---|
| Tenant families | 74% |
| Part owner families | 84% |
| Owner families | 78% |

When farmers and their wives are classified according to education, sharper differences appear, particularly among the women. Seven sample areas from six states show that Extension was reaching 78 per cent of the farmers with eight grades of schooling or less, and 88 per cent of those with high school but no college training. Among the women in nine areas from eight states, the figures were respectively 35 and 58 per cent.

When the Division of Field Studies and Training of the federal Extension office surveyed participants and non-participants in six states, two New England, two Midwestern, one Southern, and one Far Western, the homemakers participating in home demonstration programs were found to have a somewhat higher socio-economic status, and were more likely to own their homes, than the non-participants. Their homes were also larger, in better repair, and better equipped. The differences were not large but they were significant. Depending on the state, participants had also had from one to two more years of schooling than non-participants.

More recent studies have attempted to discover the coverage of Extension by asking a battery of questions, such as whether interviewees could name the county agricultural or home demon-

stration agent, whether they attended meetings, used bulletins, called on the agents for assistance, and the like. In one Michigan study, noted elsewhere, 100 per cent of the full-time farmers had more or less frequent contact with Extension. In New York the proportion was about 80 per cent. The state-wide survey in Vermont revealed that 80 per cent of the farmers knew about their county agent and half of them had had dealings with him. Almost six in ten homemakers said that Extension was the best medium of information. One more illustration, from a county survey made in 1948 in the state of Washington, not yet published, may be given. In this county, where 35 per cent of the farmers had incomes of less than $2,500 in the peak year of 1947, 95.2 per cent of all farmers had an average of five different kinds of contacts with Extension. For all economic groups, the larger the number of contacts, the greater the number of practices recommended in Extension's teachings that were adopted. When these farms and homes were measured on the basis of level of living, the bottom third had only about half the number of kinds of contacts the top third had. But even these less advantaged families averaged nearly four kinds of contacts.

## *INTERPRETING THE DATA*

Each reader can interpret these data in his own terms. To the authors they seem to reflect credit on the Extension Service, even giving full weight to the obvious gaps in its coverage and to its mistakes. There are several bases for this judgment.

In the first place, extensive researches by rural sociologists have shown that appreciable minorities of every population group or community, studied from the point of view of social participation, do not share in the organized social life of the places where they live. They prefer not to be aligned with any group but to rely upon informal contacts or activities for such social contacts as they desire. In many studies, these non-participants in non-church group activities amounted to from 40 to 50 per cent of the adult farm or rural populations. In no study examined by the authors is the proportion below 20 per cent. Even the churches, which, like the Extension Service, enjoy professional leadership, fail by considerable margins to enlist all adults, despite the high value rural society places upon participation in religious activities. Indeed, in some areas the proportion of rural people influenced

by Extension exceeds the proportion enrolled in the churches. Giving due weight to the fact that American society makes a place for the dissenter, the unsocial, even the iconoclast, in comparison with other agencies and institutions the record of the Extension Service appears to be significantly above average, judged in over-all state or national terms. This is also true in hundreds of counties.

## *GAPS IN EXTENSION COVERAGE*

The gaps in coverage, however, cannot be ignored. They represent challenges to the Service. Some of them were noted in the chapter on Program Planning. Others have been listed in the summary of studies given in this chapter. It is important, if Extension is to improve, to examine further the groups not as well reached as the average.

### *Cities*

The first of these can be quickly dismissed. Extension makes little direct educational contribution to the urban population. True, a number of the highly urbanized states have a few urban agents in the home economics field, and a certain amount of cooperation goes on between the agricultural agents and urban groups, especially in areas where a given city recognizes that it has a large rural hinterland that contributes to its economic life. During such crises as war this cooperation increases. In more normal times, when urban interest is less and the demands of rural constituencies are many, agents regard urban work as a marginal activity, except for fulfilling an obligation to report to urban taxpayers on what the Service is doing for the general welfare. This obligation, which should include interpreting the farm point of view and farm needs to urban people, is important, and several papers at meetings of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities in recent years have stressed its value and implied, as did the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies and Goals, that it should be given more attention. On the home economics side, where cities lack adult education agencies in this supremely important area, Extension may well meet the need when and if asked. Such requests are increasing, and in 1948 several states began the process of securing funds to respond to them.

*Villages*

The situation is different with respect to the rural non-farm population. People in such areas are next-door neighbors of the farmers. To an increasing extent rural villages and towns have become centers of rural life. Farmers and their wives in considerable proportions belong to village organizations or community organizations meeting in village or town centers. There they secure many of the services they require, from medical care and banking facilities to education for their children. They comprise an appreciable proportion of the membership of village churches. Social interaction is so frequent and continuous that the village or small town and its rural hinterland are usually two halves of the same community. Village women have the same problems of homemaking as farm women. Village families have gardens or "farmettes," as indeed do many urban workers who can afford to live on the outer fringe of urban commuting zones.[4] Moreover, village business has a lively awareness that its well-being depends upon agricultural prosperity. For that reason village merchants and professional men are keenly interested in farm affairs.

Since centers of this size, if they desire adult education, lack the many agencies which can supply such needs in larger cities, it was natural that Extension should respond to this situation. A vast majority of the million non-farming families changing agricultural practices in 1947 and the equal number changing home economics practices lived in rural non-farm territory. They represented 21 per cent of the families changing agricultural and 35 per cent of those changing home economics practices. The comparable proportions in the peak war year of 1943 were 36 per cent and 40 per cent. The decline from war-stimulated contact with Extension appears to have been halted, and at a level above prewar. If one assumes that practically all non-farm homes reached are in rural territory, then agricultural and home economics agents each reach about one home in six effectively enough to produce actual

[4] A. A. Asadorian, *Recent Resettlement in Rural Rhode Island* (Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 293, August, 1944), Kingston, Rhode Island.

Nathan Whetten and others, Studies in Suburbanization—a series of social studies of four Connecticut townships, Windsor, Norwich, Wilton, and Litchfield, published between 1938 and 1948 by the University of Connecticut at Storrs.

Walter Firey, *Social Aspects to Land Use Planning in the Country-City Fringe* (East Lansing, Mich.: State College Bulletin 339, June, 1946).

changes in procedures. The total influence of Extension in this area is of course larger than this figure indicates. In any general meeting it is impossible to separate those who attend into farm and non-farm residents. Moreover, many non-farm families send directly to the state Extension office for bulletins and listen to Extension broadcasts without ever entering the agent's offices or attending a meeting.[5]

It would appear that service to this large element in the population should be considerably increased. This was the opinion of the Joint Committee. Nationally speaking, the rural non-farm population is now slightly larger than the farm population. This situation now prevails in exactly half of the states and in the others the trend is in that direction, stimulated in part by the mechanization of agriculture and the steadily increasing size of farms. In the famous dairy state of Wisconsin, in the quarter-century between the two world wars, the farm population declined by about 10 per cent, whereas the rural non-farm population gained about 25 per cent. It is now two-thirds as large as the farm group. In the 16- to 24-year age group the preponderance of the rural non-farm group is even larger than that for the total population. In about thirty states it exceeds the rural farm population of this age.

It is easy to recommend that Extension greatly increase its service to the rural non-farm population or to criticize it, as some do, for failing in this particular. It must be remembered, however, that any considerable expansion in this admittedly underserviced area would involve either less attention to the farm population or more staff, and therefore larger appropriations.[6] The former alternative has in some measure been adopted by the home economics area of Extension, in large part because of the insistence of village women's groups. With 30 per cent fewer counties organized for home economics than for agricultural Extension,

[5] The senior author lives in a rural non-farm community, where many friends and neighbors are interested in home gardens. All know and use Extension bulletins and circulars. Only one has personal contact with the county agent. He is a part-time farmer with a considerable acreage who produces commercially.

[6] What is involved can be illustrated by an experience of the senior author on a return trip with his county agent from a war labor recruitment meeting in a town of some 3,000 population. The agent stopped once to advise about a victory garden of perhaps 1,200 to 1,500 square feet and again at the largest vegetable farm in New England. Both calls were important to the recipient. Each took about twenty minutes. Both were equally costly, equally important to the taxpayer involved, but the results in food production were infinitely greater from one than the other.

the number of homes changing practices among the rural non-farm population equals the number changing agricultural practices, but in the rural farm population only about half as many homes change home economics procedures. However, there is little difference between agriculture and home economics when measured by total homes changing practices *per agent.*

### *The "Bottom Third"*

This chapter has already noted that certain groups were somewhat better reached by agricultural Extension work than others, though the differences were not considerable. The conclusion of the studies drawn upon and of others can be summed up in the following comment from the Vermont study.[7] "The groups among whom the extent of the agent's contacts can be most usefully increased are the younger farmers, those with gross incomes under $3,500 in 1945 and those with only grade school education." The Michigan studies confirm the need for greater attention to young farmers but add another consideration also, noted in a few other studies and mentioned more than once to the authors in personal conversations, i.e., the difficulty of reaching the top 5 per cent of the farmers, measured either by income or by acreage. Possibly the problem here is that in order to reach more of the general run of farmers, Extension teaching is on too low a level to profit those at the top.

It is quite clear from the data given that differences in the coverage and service of Extension are wider among women than among men. One reason lies in the fact that there are more agricultural agents per county served than there are home demonstration agents—1.5 to 1.2. Furthermore, middle-aged native farm women in the top two-thirds of the total farm homemakers, as measured by both income and education, are better served than others.[8]

[7] USDA, *The Extension Service in Vermont,* Part I, *Farmers and the Extension Service;* Part II, *Farm Women and the Extension Service* (Washington, D. C.: 1947.)

[8] The only state-wide survey made gave the following results with respect to attendance at home economics Extension meetings:

"48 percent of the native born
27 percent of the French Canadian

Among the age groups these proportions have attended:

55 percent of the women 45–59
44 percent of the women 30–44

One explanation for this difference lies in the fact that home economics Extension is frequently developed through organized clubs. In the Vermont survey it developed that about two-fifths of those who did not belong to such a club lived in areas where no home demonstration clubs existed. Thus, one meets again the issue already raised several times in this report: How much can an agent do in an average 55-hour working week, when she has a potential constituency of 2,000 farm homes and some hundreds or thousands of rural non-farm homes scattered over an area of 500 square miles?

This is not the whole story, however, for the Vermont survey also showed that six out of ten non-participants lived within reach of organized Extension clubs. Some were mothers with children too young to be left and with no one to care for them. Some "had never been asked to join." This is certainly unfortunate, but it must be recognized that these educational groups are also social groups. It is no easier for Extension Service than it is for the church to break through the lines of social cleavage existing in a community, though it can be and has been done by both institutions. It is significant that the proportion of women of foreign stock reached by Extension by other means than formal meetings, both in Vermont and elsewhere, was and is significantly lower than for native women. Furthermore, both urban and rural workers have noted the fact that among recent immigrants the men are often opposed to having their women mingle freely with "natives." Also, some studies have shown, and this concerns men as well, that some interviewees have voiced objection to "closed meetings," an allusion to the fact that where there is a sponsoring organization for Extension one is supposed to belong to it, in order to participate in Extension activities.

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42 percent of the women over 60
20 percent of the women under 30

Women in the various income groups have attended as follows:
49 percent of the women in the upper third
53 percent of the women in the middle third
31 percent of the women in the lower third

Attendance in the various educational groups has been as follows:
71 percent of the women with college training
51 percent of the women with high school training
30 percent of the women with grade school training"

—USDA, *The Extension Service in Vermont*, Part II, *Farm Women and the Extension Service* (Washington, D.C.: 1947), p. 24.

*Negroes*

The mention of recent foreign-stock population groups raises the question as to whether Extension serves adequately the two chief non-white groups within the United States, Indians and Negroes. With respect to the former, the Indian Service employs Extension agents, and this population group is excellently served, especially in the Southwestern states.

With respect to Negroes, the situation is somewhat more complicated. The Smith-Lever Act makes the contributions of the Extension Service available to all the people of the United States. White agents serve Negro farmers and homemakers as they do whites. But in counties with a high concentration of Negro farmers, Negro agents are also employed. In the 1,300 counties of the Southern region 343 Negro county agents comprise 13.9 per cent of the total county agricultural workers and the 358 Negro home demonstration agents comprise 23.6 per cent of the total county workers. In two states in the Northeastern region which borders on the South there are eight agricultural and eleven Negro home demonstration agents. Though no separate records are kept, it has been estimated that nationally between 6 and 7 per cent of the time of all white agents is devoted to work with Negroes. Since most of this work is in the South, it would appear, therefore, that in this respect the proportionate service given to this group by Extension corresponds closely and in home economics actually exceeds the 23.1 per cent of all farms in the South operated by Negroes. Surveys of sample areas in Georgia and Arkansas in the 1930's showed 74 per cent of Negro farm families influenced by Extension as compared with 85 per cent of the white farm families. With respect to the 4–H enrollment the situation is not as favorable. For the decade of the 1930's, 27 per cent of eligible Negro farm boys and girls were club members as against 56 per cent for whites.

It is quite obvious from the evidence that Extension does not reach 100 per cent of its potential constituency and also that in many situations the gaps are clearly related to social, economic, or cultural factors. Further improvement calls for research in order to locate and define the special situations. It also calls for additional staff if there is to be any marked expansion in serving the rural non-farm population. More staff will be called for also if the considerable numbers of functional illiterates in several hundred

counties are to be given instruction. It is well established that this is a special area in the field of adult education, requiring techniques adapted to it. To revert to a county mentioned before, its 9,000 farmers and homemakers who have had little or no schooling cannot be served by the same program that will meet the needs of some 1,500 persons with high school or college training.

In terms of the existing situation, however, including present staff and budget, and in comparison with other agencies, Extension has done an excellent job. One important proof of this lies in the steady large increase in appropriations. Taxpayers do not readily vote money to an agency not furnishing services they desire.[9]

## *EXTENSION'S EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS*

### *Flexibility of Program*

It is in the nature of social institutions that they change slowly. Programs once adopted and operated are not easy to alter. In the field of education, Mort and Cornell[10] have shown that from the time a desirable new instructional area or major educational procedure is first established in a few schools until it is a regular part of the program in more than half the schools of the state, a half-century has elapsed. The Extension Service is only thirty-five years of age, but, as this bulletin has already amply shown, its program has been steadily adapted to changing needs and expanded as new needs arose and were recognized. This is a unique record among large social institutions. For it there are two explanations. First, the cooperative nature of Extension's program planning and the frequent contacts of county agents with their constituents on farms and in homes keep them in touch with and alert to changing needs. Second, the Service has so won the confidence of rural people that they turn to it first when any new problem or need arises, and Extension responds.

[9] During the depths of the depression, the legislature of one important Midwestern state decided as an economy to withdraw all funds from home economics Extension. The decision was announced in evening newspapers and broadcasts. Before the next afternoon, approximately 500 angry women had descended on the state legislature and some thousands of others telephoned or telegraphed their protests. The appropriation was continued.

[10] Paul R. Mort and Francis G. Cornell, *American Schools in Transition* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1941).

Again, the program is flexible in its adaptation to widely variant local conditions. There is, for instance, no general poultry program for the United States that is similar or the same everywhere. A poultry program in a disadvantaged area in the Southern mountain region, designed largely to raise the nutritional standards of the family and perhaps increase its income slightly, is one thing. Quite another is a poultry program in any of the large commercial poultry areas, where elaborate housing and mechanical aids permit one person to look after 10,000 birds.

### *Demonstration Method*

The effectiveness of demonstration as a pedagogical method has already been dwelt upon. In almost all skill subjects it is the best teaching device, especially among the skeptical or the educationally disadvantaged, provided that it is based on the local situation and indicates a better method within the ability of the local people to adopt.

### *Effecting Social Change*

There has been debate at times as to whether in a democratic society, as compared with a dictatorship, desirable social changes could be accomplished by educational means. Extension has been a most influential source of rural social change. In the aggregate, the tens of millions of changed practices reported in the thirty-five years of its history fall little short of a revolution in both farm and home operation. Even under the lash of depression it is doubtful if the first programs under the Agricultural Adjustment Act would have been adopted by the 20-to-1 vote they were, had it not been for the teaching of the Extension Service. For the highly individualistic American farmer to approve crop restriction was indeed a major social change. When the same suggestion was made only two or three years before it was spurned; the farmers' own program for agricultural relief in the late 1920's called for no production controls. Extension's explanation of and teaching about the plan made the difference. Extension's teaching about the cooperative movement was also one of the factors in doubling the number of cooperative organizations and quadrupling the membership in the first half of the 1920's.

### *Discussing Controversial Issues*

Many educators and laymen have held that in a democracy

impartiality on political issues, properly required of a tax-supported educational institution, precluded the possibility of including current issues in a teaching program. For more than twenty years Extension has proved, as noted elsewhere in this bulletin, that such questions can be discussed impartially and with profit to democracy.

*Leadership Training*

The program of Extension has reached hundreds of thousands more persons than otherwise would have been possible through the use of local leaders trained by professional staff members. This trust in the recognized leaders of the people themselves has paid large dividends. Experience shows this to be true in highly diverse situations not only in the United States, but also in the Rural Reconstruction Movement program in China, and elsewhere.

*Federal-State-Local Relations*

In some nations, even some which are democracies, there is a high degree of control over education by national or state authority. This is contrary to the American tradition. State control even over such matters as teacher certification, specifications for school buildings, safety standards for school buses, has come but gradually. The powers held by State Boards of Education vary widely among the forty-eight states. This situation has militated against federal aid to public school education, which it has been argued would inevitably mean federal control. It is significant that throughout its history the rural adult education enterprise called Extension has enjoyed federal subsidy without federal control. As already pointed out, control of this large adult education enterprise rests with the state and the county. Neither federal nor state government forces the county to have both agricultural and home demonstration agents.[11] In some states the agents handle both adult and boys' and girls' club work. In others there are county agents just for the club work. The federal government cooperates fully in either case. Sometimes the programs or projects are set on a state basis. More often and increasingly the county or even the community determines its own activities. Specialists and agents serve these local desires. The federal

[11] Part of the discrepancy is due to the fact that available positions have not yet been filled.

staff are called on for advice and materials, and for information as to what other states are doing. They may proffer advice but they do not and cannot command. They may withhold funds for projects outside the law, and now and then this happens. But in more than a third of a century of cooperation serious difficulties between federal Extension officers and the states have been extremely rare. One or two of the most serious have arisen when a state governor or political party has sought to remove professional employees and substitute political appointees. Here the federal workers have been sustained and were really fighting the battle of the state staff and its constituency. The states guard their prerogatives jealously. Federal workers are firmly convinced that this democratic procedure makes for the best results in the long run.

The evidence shows that the Cooperative Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service is a democratic system of rural adult education. It has helped increase farm income and improved the uses of that income. It has made the home unit central in its philosophy and in much of its teaching. It has set up a unique cooperative relationship between the local people and at levels of government from federal to county. It has been interested in conserving both natural and human resources and in promoting a higher level of living for families and communities, and it has paid attention to such new challenges as education for leisure and for better health. It has based its work on facts and a respect for science. It has remained politically non-partisan, though not uninterested in public policies, especially such as affect agriculture. Extension has not covered its field completely and has had to make many adaptations to its heavy load. It has not reached the illiterate and the very poor as well as it has others, though it has done far better than many think. The temptation to rest on laurels already won, and sponsor a stereotyped program, has not always been resisted in counties or some states, though as a unit it has been remarkably adaptable and dynamic. Although its local programs are not always as well integrated within the Service and in relation to other agencies as is desirable, these and other faults are no more universal throughout the Service than are its strong points. They point to problems that must be solved in the future. The remainder of the discussion in this chapter turns to that future.

Entomologist demonstrating to 4-H club the spraying of plants

*Pictures by courtesy of U. S. Department of Agriculture*

A 4-H club orchestra

## *EXTENSION TOMORROW*

There have been two significant attempts to chart the future course of Extension. The first of these was made by a committee within the federal Extension office which in January, 1946, produced a report entitled *The Scope of Extension's Educational Responsibility*. The second was the report of the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals of the United States Department of Agriculture and Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, issued in August, 1948. There are substantial areas of agreement between the two reports. The remainder of this chapter relies heavily on these two documents. The first of them, reprinted here as Appendix I, should be studied by any serious reader of this bulletin. It is in effect an integral part of it.

With Extension, as with any other institution, the future can be read in part from an analysis of the trends which have developed up to the present. Extension will continue to be an adult education agency. It will interpret education as the diffusing of information, but it will also interpret it to mean that it must lead its constituency to recognize and analyze problems, develop ways of solving them by individual or group action as the situation calls for, and take the action required in accordance with their own decisions.

The first responsibility of Extension will be to the people living on the farms, but increasingly rural non-farm and even urban people will come into the program. This program to date has been, and will continue to be an evolutionary process, as new situations raise new problems and as the people themselves recognize that these problems affect their welfare. Because problems will differ by crop and region, because cultural backgrounds and economic and educational status vary widely among and even within the fifty-one states and territories, the scope and content of Extension's program will also always vary widely.

Clearly, however, certain over-all trends will affect that program everywhere, even though local adaptations differ. Some of these have already been noted in various connections in the previous chapters. These and others will be listed here in terms of program.

### *Technological Progress and Problems*

Clearly one of these trends is that of technological progress. There will be a further substitution of motor for animal power

on the farm, and for human power in the home. There will be further improvements in crop varieties and in cultural practices. These changes will flow from the continuing and widespread research under way in federal and state experiment stations. They will dictate the content of Extension's teaching in the area of agricultural production and in certain related areas. For instance, farmers will need far more education in the comparative economic advantage of numerous types of new equipment in terms of the size of their operations. Over-investment in machinery can be even more fatal than under-investment. New problems of maintenance have arisen with new machines, as well as problems of priority of investment in terms of crops raised, available capital, and the varying importance of the operations capable of mechanization. Such considerations apply also to the home. The homemaker hesitating between the purchase of a motorized washing machine and an electric dishwasher, has the right to expect advice from the home demonstration agent. Extension is in process of taking such considerations into account.

### *Considerations of Finance*

Increase in the mechanization of farm practices has resulted in increasing machinery's share of the three main elements in the capital value of a farm: land, buildings, and machinery. Interest on capital has by the same token become a larger element among the various categories of expense chargeable against farm income. There would appear to be need for education in the whole area of finance, including credit, its uses, how to obtain it, what sort of credit to use, and farm accounting.[12] Some activities in these areas are under way and at least one, farm accounting, has long had attention.

### *What Price Efficiency?*

Mechanization is regarded as progress, but in agriculture, as in industry, it has also brought distress. There are always some who cannot adjust to new conditions, often through no fault of their own. Between 1920 and 1945 the average size of farms in the United States increased from 148 to 190 acres. Not all regions have shared in this increase, but in general it is fair to say that

[12] A problem of the earlier years of the then Federal Land Banks illustrates this point. Too many farmers secured mortgages on their farms, running thirty years or more, to purchase machinery with a life of fifteen years.

mechanization has increased farm size. Many persons so displaced, voluntarily or otherwise, have found urban employment. But many families who lacked resources to expand have stayed on their small farms, or, if perchance they did purchase machinery, found themselves under-employed on their own acres. There is a widening gap between efficiency and inefficiency in agriculture. Some of those who would be classified in the latter category are, or will be, badly in need of educational help in improving their operations or in seeking alternate means of livelihood. Others are operating on a small scale by choice. They may have other employment; they may be partially retired. The educational problem here is to help them make the best possible use of their available resources within the limits set.

Extension will increasingly differentiate among various classes of farms and farmers, such as the large-scale, highly mechanized and often corporation farms; large, efficient family-operated farms that use hired help for a considerable part of their labor requirements; medium-sized family-operated farms with or without some hired assistance at rush periods; smaller family-operated holdings, less efficient, with family labor under-employed; and finally, the small part-time farms ranging down to the few acres of the week-end or suburban "farmer." The numbers of these farms in small categories run into the hundreds of thousands. While the boundary lines between them are not clear-cut, they represent clearly distinguishable patterns[13] which Extension in the future will increasingly regard.

### *Production for What?*

Agriculture in the United States is commercialized. Whereas it once took nine farm families to feed and clothe themselves and one non-farm family, today farm families make up not more than one in six of the total families in the United States. Not all of them are fully employed in agriculture, and yet large proportions of some crops are available for export after domestic needs are supplied. To the American farmer, therefore, marketing is extremely important. The probable further increase in production lends urgency to this consideration. The future will see Extension devoting more teaching time to marketing. Market outlets, changing consumer demands, more efficient distribution and pack-

[13] Sloan Wayland, *A Study of Social Patterns of Farming* (Forthcoming).

aging, and a host of other problems of little importance a generation ago have become urgent today. In the matter of changing market demands, another area of Extension, together with its urban counterparts in schools and other agencies, will have great influence, namely teaching in nutrition. It is already responsible for sharp drops, over the very period of Extension's history, in per capita consumption of energy foods and increases in protective foods.

*The Role of Agriculture in Public Affairs*

This last consideration clearly points to considerations of public policy. This would appear to be another area for increased emphasis from Extension in the future. The experimental period is over. Farm people know that as agriculture moves further and further from its self-sufficient basis, it becomes more and more dependent upon the fortunes of the non-agricultural economy and of the world itself. Such matters as the effect of the International Trade Organization and of the international wheat agreement upon the farmer and his family are of vital concern to him. On these and other comparable matters Extension will increasingly provide basic background information and the whys and wherefores of alternative solutions to the problems of concern. The people can then come to a decision which in a democracy is at once their prerogative and their duty.

*The Community*

What is true in terms of the nation and the world is even more true in community terms, for it is in the home community that national and world trends are experienced and where people react and adapt to them through their own familiar organizations and associations. In the community, too, the broadening interests of the people are first manifested. Illustrations of this have already been given. The growing concern of rural people for better health facilities, for public health programs, including sanitation, has had its effect on Extension, and the program already begun will expand. Probably another area relates to rural education, for concern here is clearly growing. Rural school terms are slightly shorter on the average than those in urban communities, rural teachers in most states are less well paid and trained, and the value of rural school property per pupil is less than half the city average.

On this point the Joint Committee on Extension Programs, Policies, and Goals says:

> The stake of extension in good education, country and even city, is clear. With the increasing complexity of our interwoven life and the increasing application of science to agriculture, anything less than educational parity between country and city is completely unjustified. The rearing of children, many of whom will live in the cities, and the production of food and fiber adequate for the Nation's needs, clearly show the validity of this assertion. Until such equality is achieved, extension, as an educational agency, will have to deal with a population group which, in comparison with the city population, will be disadvantaged in terms of the amount and quality of formal education they will receive.[14]

Extension will also pay more attention to the community as a unit in its own organization. The group, the neighborhood, the community, have all grown far more important than they were in the first year of Extension's history. Organized and informal face-to-face contacts have greatly increased. Extension will regard these areas of natural association and base its organization upon them.

### *Training*

All these developments are found in turn to reflect on the training Extension employees receive for their highly difficult but challenging jobs. Especially since the war, interest in this aspect is increasing rapidly. Clearly the training must include content in both physical and social sciences and some acquaintance with adult education. Perhaps Extension will eventually require a Master's degree as a prerequisite for employment as a county agent, just as some engineering schools now demand five years of work before graduation.

### *Self-Appraisal*

Almost from its inception Extension has been interested in studying its procedures, methods, and results in order to make its work more effective. The federal Extension office has a unit of field studies. It, increasingly with the close cooperation of the states, has conducted some hundreds of studies largely with respect

[14] *Report* (Washington, D. C.: 1948), p. 66.

to such things as the relative effectiveness of various teaching methods, types of supervision, organization, leadership, and program planning. Extension coverage and participation have also been studied. Some of these studies have been referred to at various places in the preceding chapters. They have been of great service and a number of them should be repeated because of the greatly changed situation since their results became available. Others of the same types should be made in states which have not yet examined critically their own work.

There is likely to be further development in Extension research, giving larger consideration to those social and cultural factors which condition the results the service studies noted above have produced. The Joint Committee said on this point:

> The time has come when extension needs more of the so-called "fundamental" research. Evidence is needed as to why some people participate in extension educational efforts and others do not. Without such guides, extension efforts to increase participation will be built without knowledge of some of the most important factors determining participation. Probably such research, when undertaken, should be done by State experiment stations in cooperation with their extension services or the Federal Division of Field Studies and Training.
>
> Certain precautions in this connection seem worthy of notation. The first is that educational research is a technical field in itself requiring participation of those who understand the techniques and devices of rural adult education and what can be expected of them. But, since many types of extension research must be conducted in relation to activities bearing upon some subject-matter field, the research technicians in that subject-matter field have a definite contribution to make in planning the specifics of the research to be undertaken. Thus cooperative efforts of both groups are needed if the most productive results are to be obtained.
>
> In the second place educational research has historically been largely preoccupied with research and evaluation within the setting of formal classroom education. Extension education is carried on in a vastly more flexible situation without the possibility of utilizing the same precise experimental controls that is possible with formal educational research. Furthermore, the people served vary widely in education, with many of them falling into very low educational levels.
>
> The approaches to extension research, therefore, must recognize the wide variability in human characteristics which typify the extension "classes." Reasons must be found why different strata within the total population served react differently to the methods and procedures

used by extension. It is not enough to measure total participation alone.[15]

The paragraphs above have dealt with what seem to be probable new emphases in the Extension Service program. Much of the present program will continue. Clearly the emphasis of Extension on the home and its improvement, and on home and farm planning, is basic. Clearly, too, the 4–H club work has a deservedly high place in the regard of the rural people, and its goal of three million or more members by 1950 may well be attained. Work with older rural youth may also see some expansion; this has been urged by the Joint Committee.[16] These aspects of Extension may and probably will grow, but they are not new.

## *SUMMARY*

It seems fitting, in closing this part of the discussion, to quote the summary of the federal staff report referred to at the opening of this section.

> This appraisal of the various major problem area fields, particularly those sections relative to the history and current status of extension effort and emphasis needed in the future, necessarily relates to the total effort in all States and Territories. It is recognized that in specific States, extension assistance in certain problem area fields, in which the need for increased attention has been stressed, has progressed much farther than implied for the Nation as a whole. The reverse is true for certain other problem area fields and for other States.
>
> From the standpoint of the total extension effort, however, it is felt that if Extension is to attain a well-balanced program of educational service, certain adjustments in the distribution of total effort will be necessary. The general direction of and approximate proportional shifts in emphasis appearing desirable are:
>
> (1) Maximum increase in emphasis is needed in the fields of (*a*) economic problems and public policies; (*b*) marketing and distribution; (*c*) certain segments of the field of social relations, adjustments, and cultural values; (*d*) farm homes and buildings; and (*e*) health, particularly with respect to developing a better understanding of the total rural health situation and methods of improvement through group action.
>
> (2) A moderate increase in emphasis is needed in the fields of (*a*)

[15] *Op. cit.*, p. 40.
[16] *Op. cit.*, pp. 62–63.

conservation of natural resources, (*b*) farm and home management, and (*c*) rural organization and leadership development.

(3) Problems in the field of production techniques have historically commanded a major portion of Extension's total time and effort. This situation should continue. However, looking to a well-rounded service, proportionately less increase in extension work is appropriate in this field than in the other fields listed.

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## PRINCIPLES OF EXTENSION WORK

THE rural adult education enterprise in the United States known as the Cooperative Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service is an enterprise with a distinguished list of achievements and a future of promise. Of late years an increasing number of persons from foreign countries have become interested in studying the American Extension Service in all its aspects. Some of them have been sent by their governments to spend considerable portions of time as trainees within the Extension Service itself. For them the Division of Field Studies and Training of the Service has set up a separate section.

Far more who are interested have had only brief periods in the United States, and still more can only read about what has been attempted in this country. For them especially a discussion of the principles of Extension work is included here. These principles are important for any nation interested in organizing or expanding its own Extension Service. Nothing could be more unfortunate than for other countries to attempt merely to copy what the United States has done. If the United States has anything to offer in the way of specifics of Extension organization, methods, or program, it is purely accidental in the sense that quite similar conditions make a close similarity of operation feasible. Only such similarity of conditions would justify an approach in another country patterned closely after that in the United States.

Before discussing some of the principles of Extension believed by the authors to have broad validity, it is important to review some of the conditions which were influential in shaping Extension in the United States. Foremost among these conditions is the fact that each state and territory had had an agricultural college, in most cases for at least half a century before the Extension Service was established as a cooperative federal-state-county enterprise. Thus there was ready to hand an institution willing and

able to accept the administrative and supervisory responsibilities involved. It was also an institution which had had about two decades of experience in another cooperative venture, namely the agricultural experiment or research stations located at each college but cooperating in many projects with the United States Department of Agriculture. This decentralization of authority permitted shaping the Extension program to meet the varying situations as they existed within the several states and territories.

The discussion earlier in this bulletin of the relationships between the Extension Service and its sponsoring state colleges with other federal agencies has indicated that difficulties often arose initially. The root cause of the difficulties often inhered in the fact that some of these newer agencies were exclusively federal; by that token they lacked a local cooperating agency and hence were less adaptable, less able to adjust to local conditions and necessities. Difficulties in conforming to some of the wartime directives affecting agriculture in some areas of highly specialized minor crops also showed the importance of decentralization.

Quite apart from the existence of the state colleges of agriculture, the decentralization of the Extension Service fitted a pronounced cultural trait of Americans, especially of rural Americans. They have wanted to keep under local control the institutions which served them. The smallest legal unit in the United States is the school district, and while thousands of these have been consolidated into community-wide units, and while some states now have county systems and two of them state systems, there are still tens of thousands of districts in which the single one-room, one-teacher school is administered by a board elected from those residing in its immediate neighborhood. Proposals that the United States Departments of Commerce and of Labor should organize extension services similar to that of the Department of Agriculture thus far appear to have foundered on the objection that there is no related institution in the states capable of exercising administrative control.

Many countries with centralized state or national systems of education find this situation strange. They could organize and conduct an agricultural and home economics Extension Service on a different basis than that used in the United States. Indeed, if their farmers are accustomed to centralization and value that method of operation, they should. But no such plan could have succeeded in the United States.

The Extension Service in the United States is also benefited to a peculiar degree through its association with the work of the experiment stations in the same college. This is the major source of the subject matter it "extends." An Extension Service unsupported by continuous research would be operating under a serious handicap, so serious indeed that it would soon have to do research itself. No single national research center would meet the need in any but a small nation, because it would be impossible to test findings under varying conditions of soil and climate.

The presence of these agricultural colleges and their experiment stations assures a source of reasonably well-trained workers for the Extension Service. It will be recalled that in the emergency of World War I, and even before, "emergency" employees had to be used. Good as they were in the particular situation they faced, the program of Extension could not have expanded as it has without the improvement noted in training, an improvement which it is recognized must still go on. The point is that what an Extension Service can do and how its staff have been trained conditions its program, the type of its in-service training, even its approach to its constituency.

The supporting agricultural colleges are also an evidence of an adequate tax base upon which the Extension structure could be reared. There are other societies where this base would be inadequate to build the sort of Extension Service the United States has. Adaptations would have to be made in order to provide for the most important aspects of a possible program while postponing to later and more prosperous periods an elaborated organization and program.

In considering what if anything the Extension Service of the United States may contribute to rural adult education in other countries, it is most important to regard also the economic differences in types of agriculture. In many parts of the world agriculture is still primarily on a subsistence basis, only secondarily on a commercial basis. In the United States it is primarily a commercial enterprise, so much so that during the depression of the 1930's and the recent world war considerable effort had to be put into a program designed to influence American farmers to raise more of their own food, especially in highly specialized one-crop areas. In western Europe the farmer is also a seller in the open market. But here again there is a difference. By and large western Europe is not self-sustaining as to food. It is an importing

area. The farmers of these countries are therefore always assured of a market. In large sections of the United States, agriculturists produce more than their own nation can consume. They must operate on a world market.

Between these two extremes there are vast differences in attitude. The farmer who, having provided amply for his family's needs and for his seed for the next crop year, becomes uninterested in further expansion of production, would prove an enigma to his North American colleague. He in turn would be dubious indeed about one-crop farming and concern over prices.

Another important difference lies in the degree of literacy of the farmer in Europe and America in contrast with that in many other parts of the world. The educational approach to literate and non-literate people must be sharply different if the best results are to be attained. The American Extension Service has been built on the assumption that its constituents are literate. Bulletins, circulars, letters are used to support and emphasize the spoken word. Such methods are useless among an illiterate people, however high their intelligence. Indeed, American experience itself has proved this.

The very social organization of the American farmer differs from that of much of the world. The large acreages available from the first in the development of North America, as indeed in Australia, the Argentine, and certain other countries, compelled the farmer to live on his acres. He ceased being a village dweller who went out to his fields each morning and returned to the village at night. Yet this is the normal pattern in many parts of the globe. A village-centered farm population makes it relatively easy to hold meetings, to arrange for radio broadcasts, and perhaps eventually to have televised demonstrations. In other words, the concentration of the farm population in village units in some countries compensates for the lack of automobiles and of good roads, but it requires somewhat different techniques of social organization in order to bring the teachings of Extension and the people together.

The enthusiasm of those who have observed the Extension Service in the United States for its methods and achievements is, of course, gratifying to Americans, but the imposition of such a system on another society would be unfortunate—in some instances tragic. It must be remembered that the Extension Service in the United States is itself in constant flux. Programs differ among

states and among counties within states. The recent growth of work in housing and health, discussed in another chapter, is a good example of this point. In most states these two activities, in terms of their share of the total time given, are minor. In some counties they might well be major. It is well to remember that in the United States, during the depression of the 1930's, the Farm Security Administration, charged with dealing with rehabilitation clients, was forced into a health program to help safeguard the investment of the federal government made in these clients' farms through rehabilitation loans. Technical agricultural and home economics advice and supervision was not enough. A farmer operating at 50 per cent efficiency because of some physical ailment could not use his resources effectively.

The point that Extension education must be more than technical was well made by Dr. Charles E. Kellogg of the United States Department of Agriculture, speaking before the September, 1948, meeting of the American Farm Economic Association:[1]

> Should we be able to see suddenly, tomorrow, efficient agriculture throughout the world, the pattern would be very different from place to place. It would be generally known—not known by just a few—that practices good in one place can be ruinous in others. It would be known that those practices that build up soil productivity to an efficient level, and maintain it there, also give the most efficient production over a long period. Erosive lands would be under a protective cover—not only a protective cover but also a productive cover....
>
> Farm organizations and community patterns, as well as the individual practices, will vary enormously among the great soil regions. Then, too, what people have to do because of the soil somewhat affects their social customs and ideas, just as their ideas influence their practices and organizations.
>
> Such an ideal world of an efficient agriculture would have plenty of variety in living ways as well as in technology. Uniformity would be impossible; but such differences rather than leading to war, would provide interest and stimulation.

Fortunately there have been under both public and private auspices a number of successful demonstrations in rural adult education. One of these is the Rural Reconstruction Movement in China, in which Dr. James Y. C. Yen has been an influential leader. The cultural missions in Mexico are another illustration

[1] Cf. *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, Pt. 2 (February, 1949), pp. 251-261.

of an approach fitted to the conditions and culture of the people and to the relatively limited resources of the government. Other examples are given in the descriptions of Extension in many countries in the symposium *Farmers of the World.*[2] Still others exist, such as the Maes' rural school system in Guatemala and some demonstration rural schools in Colombia, and in the few experiments in "fundamental education" under the auspices of UNESCO.

Many of these enterprises are local in the sense that they are confined to a small group of communities, a county, or a province, but they are demonstrations. They are, moreover, of the utmost significance in showing how the idea of Extension can be adapted to the peculiar needs and culture of a specific area and from that, as resources permit, expanded to other areas within a nation.

This analysis has been presented and the main point reiterated because of its extreme importance. The observer of the Extension Service in the United States sees today a large, well-financed, socially approved, successful institution. He does not see and rarely learns of the mistakes and even failures there have been in its thirty-five years of history. There is no greater mistake than to assume that technical "know-how" unaided by cultural understanding and social analysis, in other words unaided by social and educational "know-how," will solve the problems of the farmers of the world. Just this assumption accounts for a considerable proportion of the specific mistakes of Extension in the United States, as Dr. Knapp himself soon discovered.

We come, then, to the first principle based on American experience which appears to have value outside the United States. It is this: Within the necessary broad legal framework applicable everywhere within a nation, the greatest degree of latitude should be provided for with respect to program and methods in order that both may, as closely as possible, fit local conditions, that is, the local resources in soil, finances, and human beings and the local traditions, culture, and total needs.

A second principle growing out of Extension experience in the United States, as well as in other countries, is the paramount importance of the Extension employee's understanding and working in harmony with the culture. Culture is here used in its widest

[2] New York: Columbia University Press, 1945.

connotations. It includes the native skills, methods, and tools of the people. It embraces their habits, their formal and informal modes of association and organization, the structure of their collective living. It encompasses their beliefs, practices, values, taboos, and faiths. Culture is the sanctioned way of life of any people. All peoples, even the most primitive, have a culture. Probably few groups are more primitive than the aborigines of Australia. Yet these people have one of the most elaborate systems of blood relationship known to anthropologists.

The culture of any people is very precious to it. All the normal behavior patterns are rationalized in terms of the cultural values held. The more simple a culture is, the more tenaciously it is held. It is bound up with the sense of security of the social group, with the drive for group survival. There have been cases in the Pacific Islands, where a people unable to rationalize the impact of European culture upon their own deliberately chose race suicide.

It is of the essence of Extension that it attempts to produce change, to teach a more excellent way. It is inevitably an assault upon accepted procedures sanctioned by the habits of years. To succeed, the new possibilities of the age of science must be revealed with care, patience, and sympathy. The new way must, if at all possible, be rationalized, not necessarily in terms of the procedures of the old but certainly in terms of its values.

This principle is illustrated by an incident reported by Dr. Afif Tannous from a country in the Near East.[3] A village had asked for help in a serious health situation due to a contaminated water supply. The extension team concerned thought it had been agreed that the one pool in the village should be deepened and covered and that a pump be installed. Nothing happened. After much effort a second community meeting was held. Typical of the comments made Dr. Tannous quotes the following.

"...I for one have never seen a pump, nor do I know what might happen if it should be put there."

"I tell you what will happen. The water will flow out so fast that the spring will dry up in no time."

"Not only that, but the iron pipe will spoil the taste of the water for us and for our animals."

[3] *Farmers of the World*, edited by Edmund deS. Brunner, Irwin T. Sanders, and Douglas Ensminger (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), Chapter 7, "Extension Work among the Arab Fellahin," by Afif I. Tannous, pp. 78-100.

"You So-and-So," put in one of Jibrail's elders, who are much more advanced in their outlook than the people, "do you like the taste of dung in your water better?"

"Well, I admit it is bad; but we and our animals are at least used to it."

"You have told us that the water is the cause of our illness and of our children's deaths. I do not believe that, and I can't see how it could be. To tell you the truth, I believe that the matter of life and death is in Allah's hands, and we cannot do much about it."

"One more thing. We don't understand why you should go to all this trouble. Why are you so concerned about us?"

"You say that the pump will save our women much effort and time. If that happens, what are they going to do with themselves all day long?"

The extension workers began again, taking nothing for granted. An educational campaign was launched. Laboratory tests of the water were made and compared with better water from nearby villages where there were no epidemics. The operation of a hand pump was demonstrated. Quotations from the Koran, indicating that cleanliness and the avoidance of the danger of disease were required of every faithful Moslem, were used. A woman worker visited the village women and explained what the plan would mean in lightened toil for them and fewer illnesses and deaths among their children. The purely patriotic motives of the staff were emphasized. In something over a month of intensive work the project was begun.

This incident not only illustrates the necessity of taking the cultural situation into account but several other principles as well.

One, the third in this list, is that the community must be regarded as the basic unit of work. In simple societies the village is basic to the life of all. It is the world of the vast majority of the people. It is the inclusive unit, bigger than the family, more inclusive than the church. It is closely integrated and knit together. The voice of the village must be obeyed: It enforces taboos and prescribes behavior. In some cultures with elaborate systems of relationship, the village is often a large family group which has procedures distinctive to it. Most workers in cultures where the village is the unit of society have met the phrase, "I believe what you advise is good but I cannot do it. I cannot go

against my village." The extension employee must work through existing institutions and/or leaders—the council of elders in Far Eastern countries, the panchayat in India, the talking chief in many Polynesian islands, perhaps the schoolmaster or the priest—to begin to change public opinion in the community in order to change practices.

Closely akin is the fourth principle that the home must also be regarded as basic. It will be noted that in the pump incident an important influence in final success was sending a woman worker to call on the village women. A man could not have made these calls. The women could not come to the community meetings, but once taught what was involved they were very influential.

These four principles are concerned largely with the social aspects of a rural adult educational program. There are others more directly educational in their nature. The first of these is that the worker must start with the people where they are. This refers not only to their socio-economic status but even more to the level of their technology and their educational status. Proposed improved techniques and methods of teaching are alike influenced by these considerations. This principle has already been illustrated several times in previous chapters. It is closely related to the desirability of formulating a program that will meet obvious needs felt by the people.

A village in a Central American country some years ago was assigned a school teacher who was charged also from the start to work with adults. A frontal attack was planned on illiteracy. The people cooperated in building an adobe school house and community center. But when classes were about to start, the village elders explained that what the village needed far more than the three R's was water. Government help was enlisted. Plans were drawn. The villagers contributed their labor. The water supply was increased. Again the teacher prepared to devote himself fully to formal education. But the village leaders explained that now that they had water, they wanted to grow more food, so that the hunger and sometimes near-starvation they had known would be banished. Again the teacher sought government help. What crops would improve the health of the people and grow in that soil? Where could seed be had? Again the people labored, again school as such was interfered with, but more food than the village had ever known was raised. Their health improved. The people then learned that the government would not accept the surplus

products in repayment for the seed loans that had been made. They must be sold. Marketing problems were faced and solved. Once more the leaders came to the teacher. "Now," they said, "let us begin to learn." "No," said the teacher in a flash of insight, "now let us begin to learn something else, for in these last years we have all learned much that we did not know before."

Another situation on a different level was faced by the Extension Service in an American state with great extremes among its communities in levels of living. In cooperation with the Rural Electrification Administration, an educational program on motor washers was planned. But in one most disadvantaged part of a poor county, there was no electrical service available. The farm women had a very poor health record, some of which could be traced to back-breaking drudgery, especially in washing clothes, which was usually done at the bank of a stream or at a spring. This involved heating water by bonfires and in turn hauling wood. The procedure created a fire hazard. The home demonstration agent began to question this procedure. She found the people were merely following a time-honored routine. She began to get the home demonstration clubs to study the problem. Specialists in home management and engineering were called in. A wash pot heater was designed, built, and demonstrated. The idea caught on. When the men discovered how much easier it made heating water on hog-killing day, the number of requests for the simple blueprints for wash pot heaters increased even more rapidly.

In the first of these instances the people knew their needs and arranged them, so to speak, in a priority ranking. The public servant concerned was wise enough to neglect the program with which he had come to the community in favor of the people's definitions of their needs. In the second incident, the professional worker saw the need, and by questioning and then teaching slowly brought the community to solve its problem—a process that took almost half a year.

Extension workers in any society must be willing to take either approach. Sometimes staff members can follow the analysis of the community's leaders; sometimes they must develop an awareness of needs not seen by the local people, though clear to the professional worker. In either case the people must share in the development of the program. Indeed, this essentially democratic procedure is a major principle. Sharing in program-building makes

the program belong to the people. They have accepted it. It is not something they do to please an outsider or because a government decrees that they shall. Many Extension workers in the United States found, even under the recent war conditions, that there was far more ready and intelligent cooperation when they explained the whys and wherefores of a directive than when they simply announced it as a must. As so often happens, the longer way 'round was the shorter way home. An enforced procedure not fully understood, perhaps even resented, will seldom long outlast the removal of the compulsion.

In a situation with many needs, it is a wise principle to start with the simplest of those that seem more important and move progressively to those that are more difficult. The most pressing need may be too difficult to undertake until the community has learned to work together and has built confidence in itself through definite achievement in simpler tasks. Two neighboring communities in a disadvantaged area in the American South drew up almost identical programs of needs. The first started with the two most difficult items, securing a resident physician and rural electrification. Progress was so discouragingly slow that the leaders finally gave up. The worker concerned was unable to rally them to attempt something simpler. The other community began by erecting a cooperative storage shed for potatoes, and finally achieved and is operating its entire program. Its story has been written up many times.

This is an especially important principle in a simple society served by few if any agencies except Extension. As indicated in another chapter it is that the simpler the society, the broader the Extension program must needs be. In more than one spot in the world, the first step in an economic improvement program may be such a health measure as hookworm eradication. Only so will the people acquire the sustained energy necessary for improved production or other proposed activities.[4] In such relatively simple situations, the assignment of priorities is more important but also more difficult.

Another principle of importance in Extension work is to use local leaders as responsible representatives of the Service. This has many advantages. It puts in every community reached a

[4] On this general point cf. Mary Mims, *The Awakening Community* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), and Sylvester Lambert, *A Yankee Doctor in Paradise* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1941).

person known to and, assuming intelligent selection, respected by his neighbors, who will vouch for the possibly strange teachings of the Extension agent; who tries them himself and thus demonstrates their validity under local conditions. Such a person therefore multiplies manyfold the efforts of the professional staff member. The importance of this plan, everywhere desirable, is directly proportional to the size of population for which any agent is responsible. The more people he must serve, the more necessary local leaders become. Like the other principles stated, this one grows out of successful experiences in many countries besides the United States. It is one explanation of the success of the Rural Reconstruction Movement in China, of the Baillee Schools there, of the health work in the Fijian Islands and Thailand, and so on.

A related principle is that the Extension worker should be prepared to learn from the local people whom he serves. While many of their practices are outmoded and some may be based on superstition, others have stood the test of time and may be necessary adaptations to local conditions. More than one useful drug has come from tribal medicine men. Rotenone, the poisonous principle of certain insecticides derived from the tropical derris plant, was known to various native peoples in the tropics before it was "discovered" by scientists. Successful Extension is always a two-way process. The channel from the trained worker to the recipient of his teaching may be both wider and deeper than that from the learner to the agent, but both must be kept open. Some of the most valuable research results attained by experiment stations in the United States have grown out of problems presented by farmers to their agents or through testing and often improving the common-sense solution to some problem achieved by an operating farmer. There is no place in any Extension Service for a worker who, no matter how much he knows, does not look on each constituent as a potential contributor to further knowledge.

The Extension worker is an educator. He should have no regulatory or police duties. These functions are utterly incompatible. When for purposes of economy they are combined, as has happened in a few countries, education always suffers. Most of the commissions of the Conference on the Contribution of Extension Methods and Techniques Toward the Rehabilitation of War-Torn Countries held by the United States Department of Agriculture in September, 1944, stressed this principle.[5]

[5] Cf. *Conference Report.*

The Extension worker must serve all classes, conditions, and races of men. There can be no discrimination. Silt or pebbles washed down from the farm of the tenant who has been neglected in a soil conservation program may ruin a field of the local leader who has been reached. Foot and mouth disease in the paltry herd of a peon may infect the blooded cattle of the great hacienda. The Extension worker, whether a government civil servant or the agricultural missionary of a private organization, such as a religious denomination, can defeat his own ends by failing to be the teacher and servant of all.

Finally, the simpler or more primitive the society, the greater the utility of the principle of demonstration. Until confidence has been established, the earth-bound farmer is skeptical of anyone not a farmer being able to teach him about his life work. He must be shown. It was countless successful demonstrations that won for the Extension Service in the United States the high place it holds in the regard of the farm people. This means that the Extension worker must be willing to conduct such demonstrations. He must be willing, if need be, to have the dust of the land on his shoes and the good earth of the farm on his hands. The successful Extension worker is not a desk-bound civil servant. He is an itinerant teacher who goes where the people are and labors where they toil. It is for this reason that farm experience is high on the list of requirements that most state colleges in the United States have for their agricultural agents.

Other principles might be mentioned, but those which have been discussed appear most important, most universally attested in more countries than one. The failure to practice any one would measurably subtract from the success of any Extension agent or Extension Service.

# *Appendix*

## APPENDIX I

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

EXTENSION SERVICE

JANUARY 1946

## REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE FEDERAL EXTENSION STAFF ON THE SCOPE OF EXTENSION'S EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

### *INTRODUCTION*

THE Extension Service has reached a transition period in its development. Its record of educational services rendered to date is highly commendable. It cannot, however, rest on laurels previously won and maintain its record as a progressive and productive educational institution. The fact that those whom the Extension Service was established to serve are faced with new situations and recognize new types of problems in connection with which educational assistance is needed must be recognized. Past programs and operating procedures need to be weighed carefully against the demands and opportunities of the future to insure that the total extension resources are so utilized as to render the greatest contribution possible consistent with the significance of the various problems involved.

It is believed the time is particularly appropriate for all units of the Cooperative Extension Service—Federal, State, and county—to take an objective and analytical look at its total field of educational responsibility, the degree to which prevailing extension efforts are providing adequate educational assistance to each significant portion of that field, and the extent to which adjustments in extension programs, organization, and procedures may be necessary to meet the challenge of the future.

The following represents the efforts of a cross-sectional group of staff members of the Federal office of the Cooperative Extension Service to appraise the completeness and adequacy of Extension's educational efforts to date in relation to its total field of responsibilities. This

appraisal was necessarily an overall one and may not represent an accurate appraisal of the situation in any given State—and certainly not in any given county. However, the committee feels that this approach to an objective analysis of Extension's responsibilities and programs has considerable merit. The committee recommends that a similar self-appraisal be made by each State extension service.

## *HISTORICAL BACKGROUND*

The purpose of cooperative agricultural extension work was stated in the Smith-Lever Act to be "to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same." This act further stipulates that "agricultural extension work shall consist of the giving of instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture and home economics to persons not attending or resident in said colleges in the several communities, and imparting to such persons information on said subjects through field demonstrations, publications, and otherwise." It is within the framework of this legislation and other acts related to education that the scope of cooperative extension educational programs are determined.

It is to be noted that this basic legislation, enacted nearly a third of a century ago, emphasizes the vocational aspects of Extension's educational functions. However, this act and related acts have been popularly interpreted to include more than the strictly vocational aspects of education. In the early days of cooperative extension work, educational efforts were directed largely to specific farm and home operational problems. However, as the needs and desires of local people make themselves felt, and as forces of a more complex nature affecting the welfare of farm people come to be more clearly appreciated, the recognized boundaries of the field of Extension's educational responsibility must continue to be moved outward. The forces of public opinion and public desire, therefore, are at least equally as significant as the early interpretations of the original enabling legislation in determining the fields of interest in relation to which Extension should render educational assistance.

Education involves more than making available factual information; an educational achievement is attained only when interest is aroused, understanding is developed, and appropriate action is taken. An end objective of education is the development of individuals to the point where they are able to make decisions as to possible alternative courses of action with personal confidence in the soundness of the decisions they have reached. Extension's educational responsibility necessarily must include not only making available factual information in appropriate fields and how it can be applied, but also responsibility for developing an appreciation of "why," in order that informational

material presented may be weighed for validity by those being reached. In many fields of problems of vital significance to the welfare of farm people, and to others as well, there is no single and exclusive solution to particular problems. When this is the case, Extension's educational responsibility includes not only making available such facts as are known that have a bearing upon the problems involved, but also includes making available information pertaining to alternative solutions. Furthermore, this responsibility inherently includes encouraging people to consider all the pertinent facts and all the recognized alternative solutions, and to arrive at their own conclusions as to which solution promises to be the most desirable. It also includes encouraging the people so served to act in accordance with the decisions they have reached.

By the very nature of the setting in which the educational work of the Extension Service is conducted, that is, outside the formal and organized setting characterizing the public schools, colleges, and universities, one of Extension's major educational responsibilities is to create a recognition of problems and a desire on the part of people themselves to do something about them. This is a most important educational responsibility in itself and grows more important as society progresses and an increasingly great number of forces from outside the individual farms and homes come to bear upon the welfare of the people involved.

Within the framework of enabling legislation and through the years of historical development, farm people themselves, in cooperation with the representatives of the land-grant colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture, have outlined the nature of Extension's educational responsibility. This may be described as follows:

(a) From a *functional* standpoint this responsibility includes (1) the diffusing of information, (2) the development of an interest in and recognition of significant problems, (3) the encouragement of planning the best ways and means of solving the problems recognized, whether by individual or group action, and (4) stimulation of appropriate action by the people themselves in accordance with the decisions they themselves have reached.

(b) From an *operational* standpoint, Extension's educational responsibilities extend to all "the people of the United States" having an interest in "subjects relating to agriculture and home economics," on an out-of-school basis, irrespective of their place of residence, age, economic status, group affiliations, or other factors that might be used to draw lines of distinction. First responsibility is to the people living on farms, but is not restricted to them.

(c) From the *content* standpoint, it should be reemphasized that an evolutionary process of program determination is still going on as the people themselves develop appreciation and recognition of new prob-

lems affecting their welfare. In view of this fact, it is logical to assume that at any given time it will be impossible to delimit the content of an inclusive program for the Cooperative Extension Service which would be valid for all time to come. Likewise, it is probable that any specific definition of the scope of content of Extension's educational responsibility will not be acceptable to all persons concerned in all detail. However, the following classification of major fields of extension educational responsibility covers the total field fairly adequately as it is currently conceived. No doubt this field will expand in the future as it has in the past.

## *MAJOR FIELDS OF EXTENSION EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY*

In the following delineations, no attempt has been made to relate particular fields of extension educational responsibility to current extension operating procedures or organization. It is believed that all problem fields are matters of concern to all segments of the extension organization and to all those whom Extension is or should be serving. Further, that all those responsible for developing extension programs, whether for the farmer, the home-maker, or rural youth should develop programs in their respective fields of responsibility with these problem area fields in mind. It is also recognized that the various listed problem fields are not mutually exclusive and independent. However, it was felt that each was sufficiently homogeneous to provide a useful basis for analysis.

Neither does this classification presume that each field can or should receive an equal amount of extension time and effort. It is felt, however, that if extension in the future, in an expanding program, is to attain a well-balanced program of educational service, increasing attention must be directed to problems in certain fields that are not now receiving proportionately adequate attention.

### 1. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND PUBLIC POLICIES

*Delineation of field.*—The relation of international, national and local economic problems to the welfare of farm people and the public at large and various measures that could be adopted to overcome specific problems involved, such as monetary and credit policies; tax policies and public indebtedness; price control; production policies; distribution controls; regulation of monopolistic practices; tariffs; labor and management policies; international relations and trade; regional competition; regional adjustments; public facilities; land use; and the like.

*Significance of problem.*—In the years immediately ahead, American farmers will have to face many issues and participate in making numerous decisions of an economic and public policy nature that will mark-

edly affect their own welfare as well as the welfare of the entire Nation. Many of the issues will be of such character as to preclude exclusive and exact solutions. Choices of alternative courses of action will be involved. The degree to which these issues will be met most successfully will depend to a large extent upon the degree to which the citizenry has knowledge of the consequences of the various possible lines of action. At present rural people do not have all of the facts or the analyses they need to enable them to determine the best courses of action to pursue. They are inclined to resist change in existing public policies directly affecting their welfare, partly because of inability to judge adequately the possible effects of alternative policies.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—Extension educational efforts in this field are decidely inadequate. This situation prevails because the time of extension workers has been so largely involved with more specific problems for which more immediate and direct solutions are evident. Most county workers have received limited formal and in-service training in the field of economic problems and public policy. They have not been provided with adequate and timely background information and have been reluctant to sponsor educational work dealing with these problems, because of possible political implications.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—If Extension is to meet its responsibilities to the fullest degree possible, to provide farm people with information they need to enable them to present their views actively and constructively whenever decisions are to be made, markedly increased and improved extension work in relation to economic problems and public policies must be provided. There is an immediate and pressing need for strengthening extension educational efforts in this field.

2. MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION

*Delineation of field.*—Market demands for farm products as to volume, quality, and kind; necessary improvements in transportation services, marketing methods, and merchandizing programs; methods of increasing efficiency and lowering costs of distribution; consumer preferences and the relative nutritional and market values of different grades and kinds of foods; grading and standardizing products to meet market demands; new methods of processing and packaging; new market and storage facilities; adjustments in transportation costs, trade barriers and tariffs; determination of the need for cooperatives; organization, operation, and financing procedures applicable to cooperatives.

*Significance of problem.*—Agricultural production during the war years was increased approximately a third with limited amounts of labor, farm machinery, and production supplies available. Potentially greater production will be easily possible in the future as the factors

of production return to normal. Future agricultural production will be limited primarily by consumer demand for agricultural products. The equitable and efficient marketing and distribution of agricultural products will be a paramount problem, particularly the movement of adequate supplies of food through trade channels to meet human nutritional needs.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—Agricultural extension work in agricultural marketing began in a small way shortly after the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. Since that date the total amount of extension effort in this field has been increased materially, but has been rather specific in nature and limited in scope. For instance, during the decade of the 1920's most attention was directed to cooperative marketing and purchasing activities of farmers. Since then, more attention has been directed to coping with general marketing problems. With the outbreak of World War II and the loss of trained extension personnel, the volume of extension work and accomplishments in this field was somewhat reduced. As in the past, extension workers, other than trained marketing specialists, contributed materially to carrying on the educational program in marketing. Even so, the work being done at the present is not at all commensurate with the needs that exist.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—To render the necessary marketing assistance effectively to farmers will require greatly expanded and more objective extension programs. Much more emphasis will be needed on the general understanding of such fundamental considerations as efficient business and trade practices, market demands and outlets, barriers to trade, effective organization, and price relationships. A more fundamental approach to educational work in marketing will prevent the development of many undesirable marketing situations and will thereby transfer the attention of extension personnel from assisting with the solving of problems in marketing and distribution after they occur to more basic improvements in the marketing processes. If extension is to meet its responsibility to rural people in this field of education, a maximum increase in emphasis will be necessary.

### 3. SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS, ADJUSTMENTS, AND CULTURAL VALUES

*Delineation of field.*—Scientific principles of cultural development and change; man's relationship to his family, his community, and society as a whole; recreation and wise use of leisure time; growth and well-being of children; adjustment and development of youth; role of the family in farm and community life; appraisal, interpretation, and development of cultural values; development of an appreciation for the significance and beauty of rural life; aid in developing gracious social customs and manners; the place of an attractive home, in family and community development; expression of personality through related

cultural arts; guidance and development of handicraft activities.

*Significance of problem.*—The years ahead will witness serious problems of social relationships and adjustments. The war has changed many of man's basic attitudes, values, and relationships, making for added instability. Society is ever increasing in its complexity. The family and the rural community are no longer self-contained social units. Social stratification continues. Rural population is still migrating to cities. Farm and urban dwellers are becoming increasingly dependent upon each other. Man's interests are becoming world-wide.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—This is an area where Extension has pioneered in some phases and done little or nothing in others. Extension's most outstanding contribution in this field has been the assistance given young people in helping them to find their places as socially adjusted personalities in an ever-changing world. Much excellent pioneering work has been done in aiding rural people to develop harmonious family relations and adequate recreational programs. In isolated counties, agents have aided local people in analyzing needs and evolving the type of relationships and organization approach that best served the needs of the community. Group discussion has been successfully used as a method of aiding people in understanding local, national, and international issues and their relationships to the welfare of rural people.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—All this is but a start. What Extension has done has been good, but it hasn't been broad enough in scope or wide enough in coverage to meet present-day demands and needs. If rural people are not to lag in their adjustments and in the understandings of national and international trends and forces, Extension will need to find ways and means to greatly accelerate this phase of its service to rural people.

### 4. FARM HOMES AND BUILDINGS

*Delineation of field.*—Basic principles in planning and constructing farm homes and buildings for efficiency, economy, and satisfaction including location, architectural plan and appearance in keeping with intended use and requirements, economical and appropriate materials, safety, sanitation, convenience, efficiency, labor-saving devices and equipment, maintenance, repair and remodeling, protection, landscaping and roads, use of local building materials and farm labor.

*Significance of problem.*—Attractive, comfortable homes contribute immeasurably to family health, welfare, and sense of well-being. Various studies indicate that approximately a third of the existing farm dwellings are in satisfactory condition, another third are in need of major improvements, and the remaining third would have to be replaced if all farm families were to have minimum-standard housing. Likewise, extensive needs prevail for remodeling and repairing existing

farm service buildings and the construction of new service buildings. Although future economic trends will determine in part the degree to which these needs are met, it is believed that a larger number of farmers than usual now have the desire and the financial resources to resume construction, alteration, and repair of their farm homes and service buildings. The outlook indicates a rate of farm building construction in the years immediately ahead considerably higher than at any previous time. Most farm families contemplating building work need some guidance in financial planning, and educational and technical assistance in the planning, construction, and maintenance of buildings and the installation of equipment. Without such assistance, many serious mistakes will be made, and financial resources will be unwisely used.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—Cooperative extension work since its beginning has helped farm families with plans for dwellings and farm service buildings and with other educational aids to promote modernizing, equipping, repairing, and new construction. Emphasis has been placed on suitability in relation to intended use, proper architectural design and construction, and economy through use of appropriate and available local building materials and labor. Extension activities in this field have lapsed considerably in recent years because of conditions that have retarded farm construction work. At present, Extension is probably not too well prepared to meet the anticipated needs of farm people for educational assistance in connection with their farm building program in the years immediately ahead.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—In order to meet the needs of farm families for building advice during a period of extraordinary national interest in farm building construction, a comprehensive program of extension work should be developed. This should provide dependable information on the relation of investment to income, financing, technical and other services available, as well as educational information on the functional requirements of dwellings and beautification of farmsteads. Maximum emphasis will be required on the preparation of subject-matter materials and aids, and training of extension workers and their cooperators in order to meet this educational responsibility.

5. HEALTH

*Delineation of field.*—Basic facts regarding health conditions in rural areas and facilities available or needed to promote improvement; methods of improving health conditions and services through group action; principles underlying successful group action in this field; income and population essential to attract and maintain necessary facilities and services; environment as regards sanitation, nutrition, protective clothing, and protective health measures; skills in home nursing and first aid; principles of good nutrition; production and utilization of homegrown foods in relation to dietary needs.

*Significance of problem.*—Good health among rural people is a prerequisite to sustained food production and a stable rural economy. Progress in improving health conditions and the benefits of medical science has been relatively slower in the country than in the city. The rural health situation has been deteriorating rather than improving in recent years. The present death rate among infants and small children is higher in rural areas and small towns than in larger cities. Preventable deaths from diseases such as typhoid and paratyphoid fever are highest in rural areas. The prevalence of many diseases such as pellagra, tuberculosis, anemia, and pneumonia closely related to dietary problems also testify to the need for remedial action. Selective Service records have revealed the seriousness of the health situation in rural areas. There are too few doctors, dentists, and other health workers in rural areas, and the facilities, including hospitals, they have to work with are inadequate. The years immediately ahead provide a unique opportunity for productive extension educational work in the health field. Large numbers of returning medical and dental personnel will be looking for places to locate. Local planning and action are needed to insure that a significant portion are located in rural areas. Large amounts of surplus medical equipment and supplies will soon be available at attractive prices. Local organizations need to be developed to obtain such equipment and supplies and maintain their effective utilization. Local people are becoming more conscious of their health problems, and help must be given in the process of analyzing these problems on the basis of facts and deciding on courses of action to be followed.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—Extension educational work relative to improving health conditions has been directed largely to the production and proper utilization of adequate home food supplies, nutritional requirements and ways in which they can be met, environmental sanitation and sanitary measures, and the relation of adequate housing to health conditions. A few State extension services have pioneered in helping farm families organize to obtain needed health facilities and services.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—Maximum attention needs to be directed to assisting rural people to analyze their health problems, the adequacy of health facilities and services and ways in which such services can be improved; assisting rural people to organize for group action in improving rural medical facilities and services and in mobilizing all community resources for overcoming difficulties impeding improvement in health conditions. Attention to those phases of educational work that have characterized Extension's efforts in the health field in the past should be continued. The significance and nature of the problems involved in relation to rural welfare justifies greatly increased emphasis on the part of the Extension Service.

6. CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

*Delineation of field.*—Prevention of soil losses; soil conservation practices related to crop production; conservation of water, including its economic use in irrigation; conservation of forests and prevention from destruction by fire, overgrazing, or improper lumbering operations; restoration of productive value and natural beauty to soil-depleted areas; conservation of fish and wildlife and their natural habitats.

*Significance of Problem.*—Our natural resources of soil, water, forests, grasslands, fish and wildlife have been declining at an increasing rate for many years. During periods of such national stress as a war, the depletion of soils and forests particularly are greatly accelerated. Conservation of these resources that remain is now a major agricultural objective.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—Since the beginning of extension work relative to soils, crops and livestock programs have emphasized practices that yield maximum returns consistent with sustained production capacity. Failure of the public fully to comprehend the importance of such practices has permitted the continuation of soil losses, the depletion of grass and forest lands, the pollution of streams and the destruction of cover for wildlife. More recently Extension has cooperated with Government agencies and citizens' groups on conservation programs. Soil conservation districts and grazing associations have been set up; fire-control campaigns have been organized; 4–H Club projects and activities have been developed; conservation practices have been still further improved; and an increasing proportion of effort has been directed to facilitating extension work in this broad field.

*Emphasis needed in the future.*—Extension work in conservation problems should be still further strengthened. There is need for developing a fuller understanding of the importance of productive soil, adequate water and other natural resources to the general welfare. There is also a need for developing a fuller appreciation of the extent to which adequate conservation of the natural resources may be accomplished through the efforts of individual farmers on their own farms and the extent to which group action is necessary and appropriate.

The adoption of some conservation practices often necessitates major adjustments in the organization and operation of individual farms. Others may be utilized effectively without requiring significant adjustments in farm plans. In planning for the adoption of desirable conservation measures, thorough consideration must be given to their effects on the total farm operations. Farmers often need special assistance in developing these plans. In view of the magnitude of the job to be done, a method is needed that will enable Extension to work effectively with groups of farmers on these problems.

Many of the conservation problems require group or cooperative action to produce desired results. The opportunity to increase the effectiveness of educational work in all phases of conservation through organized group action has not been fully explored. Increased attention by Extension should be directed to ways and means of rendering effective educational services to organized groups responsible for in group conservation programs and participating in them.

7. FARM AND HOME MANAGEMENT

*Delineation of field.*—Principles to be observed in selecting a farm and getting started in farming; planning farm production to insure the best use of production resources, efficiency of operation, and maximum income consistent with good land use; adjustments in farm and home operations in light of changing price and income situations; planning for production of home food supply; part-time farming; best use of human resources, including hired labor; methods of making work easier and safer; proper selection, care, and use of farm and household supplies; equipment, clothing, and household furnishings; application of principles of sound financial planning and purchasing; management of income, savings, and credit in relation to farm, home, and family needs (including clothing, shelter, education, recreation, and other requirements).

*Significance of problem.*—To supply a satisfactory income and living standard for farm families, farm people are faced with the problem of organizing their farm business to obtain the highest net income consistent with the maintenance of soil fertility and other natural resources. The impact of changing economic forces in the postwar period will be such as to dictate significant adjustments in the organization and operation of most commercial farms; adjustments in plans for the operation of the farm home also will be necessary. Even when a satisfactory long-time plan has been developed, changing natural and economic conditions will require adjustments in short-time farm and home plans to meet current situations. The complexity of the forces determining the most satisfactory type of farm organization and method of operation necessitate continuous vigilance to insure the satisfactory maintenance of the individual family income.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—Organized extension work in the field of farm management preceded the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. Early emphasis was placed on assisting farmers to keep farm records and on determining factors making for successful farm operation through analysis of farm records and farm-management surveys. On the basis of facts thus revealed, educational programs were developed for acquainting other farmers with the principles of good farm management. Home-management extension, as an organized activity, started in the early twenties. Emphasis at that time was di-

rected to kitchen improvement, and time- and energy-saving housekeeping methods. Later the economic phases were injected through emphasis on better "buymanship" and the keeping of home accounts, sometimes in conjunction with farm accounts. Educational work in farm and home management has increasingly stressed making available timely economic information essential to the soundest application of the principles of successful farm and home management. More recently, educational programs in this field have been expanded to include increasing emphasis on labor efficiency and assistance in an organized way with individual farm and home planning, in which the principles of both farm and home management are applied as a unit to the total farm and home situation.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—Farms and home-management problems will be numerous and more complicated in the years ahead. The process of balancing operations on the individual farm to meet changed consumer demand, domestic and foreign will require the best of operational and financial planning on the part of the entire farm family. It will also involve the more efficient use of time and labor on the farm and in the home. To meet rural needs in the field of farm and home management will require extension to place relatively greater emphasis and to expend additional effort on this phase of educational work. The program needs to be intensified and broadened and new methods need to be found to include many families not now being reached.

8. RURAL ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

*Delineation of field.*—Scientific principles of rural organization, maintenance, and effective utilization; principles and techniques of program planning; ways of motivating people to accept responsibility and act cooperatively in solving group area and community problems; methods of conducting group meetings and discussions; the selection, training, and motivation of volunteer leaders to help people help themselves.

*Significance of problem.*—At present the organizational situation in rural America is confused. All agencies serving rural people are inclined to develop their independent organizational plans of working with them. No systematic plans have been developed for helping rural people to appraise their organizational need and for assisting them in adjusting and strengthening their organizations so as to serve better the needs of the community, as well as to make a stronger appeal to those not now participating in any formal organizations. Extension's job and responsibility in the field of rural organization is to develop intelligent leadership and assist people in forming good habits of organization and group action. This will enable local people to help themselves and to work more effectively with all agencies that help farm people to meet their needs. This can be done without greatly

increasing the ratio of total time now spent on organization. It will, however, require the full utilization of scientific principles of organization and more emphasis on strengthening and using local organizations as an avenue of reaching and motivating rural people to utilize fully the services available to them.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—In every county where Extension works, the service is engaged in some phase of rural organization. The type of organizational program ranges from a very informal organization, including working through key farmers and leaders, to a highly organized county including: (1) County and community committees, (2) a large corps of well-trained local leaders, (3) organized home demonstration and 4–H Clubs, (4) commodity and marketing organizations, and (5) soil conservation districts, etc. Ever since the early development of extension work, several States and many counties throughout the country have systematically aided communities in appraising their needs in organizing for action. Many county workers have given assistance to churches, schools, and village-centered organizations. Except for the specific task of training leaders to aid in extension education and the development of organizations for special purposes, Extension has as yet to do a systematic and thorough job in rural organization.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—If Extension is to serve all people and enable them to utilize programs of the United States Department of Agriculture and other agencies for rural advancement, it must (a) be more flexible in adopting programs to existing patterns of organization, (b) assist rural people in the development and full utilization of their local organizations and institutions for the development of socially stable citizens, (c) obtain the cooperation and support of local people in assuming leadership responsibilities and establishing new organizations where needed to utilize more fully the services and facilities of all agencies working with rural people, and (d) encourage the further development of cooperation by all groups working with rural people on a functional community basis, thus further strengthening the democratic processes.

### 9. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

*Delineation of field.*—Agricultural production science and technology including soil management, fertilization; crop production, rotation, harvesting, and farm storage; pasture and range improvement and maintenance; seed improvement and hybridization; vegetable and fruit production; insect, rodent, and plant-disease control; production of livestock and livestock products; improvement of dairy herds, livestock and poultry; control of diseases, parasites, and insects affecting animals, tree planting and sustained forest management; maintenance of farm power and equipment.

*Significance of problem.*—Production of adequate amounts of high-quality crop and livestock products is basic to the welfare of the Nation. The use by farmers of the best agricultural production practices is a matter of great concern to the people and the object of close attention on the part of the Government.

*History and current status of extension effort.*—During World War I the Extension Service aided farmers to increase their production to meet the heavy demands of war, thereby making an outstanding contribution. During the depression Extension helped farmers to make adjustments in the face of surpluses and low prices. Again in the defense period, and throughout World War II, the Extension Service was called upon for the greatest educational effort in its history to help increase production to meet unparalleled food, feed, and fiber requirements.

From 1939 to 1945, crop acreage was increased only slightly while total production was increased approximately one-third. During these years, in spite of marked shortages of farm supplies, crop yields were increased and held above all previous records. To accomplish this, the newest developments in agricultural science were brought to the attention of farmers. They were helped with their management, labor, machinery, seed, fertilizer, insect, disease, and other problems and the efficiency of crop and livestock production, including production for home use, was promoted in all possible ways. A large proportion of the time of cooperative extension workers has been and still is being devoted to food production and conservation.

*Emphasis needed in future.*—Now that the war is over, reconversion to peacetime conditions will require another large-scale educational effort. Downward revision in certain crop acreage will mean more opportunity for much needed land use adjustments and conservation practices. The adoption of new facts developed by research must be urged, and every effort must be made to aid farmers to produce the appropriate quality and types of products at the lowest possible costs. Agricultural production, as the basic job of farmers, will continue to require a large proportion of the time of extension workers.

## *SUMMARY*

This appraisal of the various major problem area fields, particularly those sections relative to the history and current status of extension effort and emphasis needed in the future, necessarily relates to the total effort in all States and Territories. It is recognized that in specific States, extension assistance in certain problem area fields, in which the need for increased attention has been stressed, has progressed much farther than implied for the Nation as a whole. The reverse is true for certain other problem area fields and for other States.

From the standpoint of the total extension effort, however, it is felt

that if Extension is to attain a well-balanced program of educational service, certain adjustments in the distribution of total effort will be necessary. The general direction of and approximate proportional shifts in emphasis appearing desirable are:

(1) Maximum increase in emphasis is needed in the fields of (a) economic problems and public policies; (b) marketing and distribution; (c) certain segments of the field of social relations, adjustments, and cultural values; (d) farm homes and buildings; and (e) health, particularly with respect to developing a better understanding of the total rural health situation and methods of improvement through group action.

(2) A moderate increase in emphasis is needed in the fields of (a) conservation of natural resources, (b) farm and home management, and (c) rural organization and leadership development.

(3) Problems in the field of production techniques have historically commanded a major portion of Extension's total time and effort. This situation should continue. However, looking to a well-rounded service, proportionately less increase in extension work is appropriate in this field than in the other fields listed.

*USDA Extension Service Committee*

P. V. Kepner, Chairman
L. A. Bevan
Mary L. Collings
Douglas Ensminger
Mina Hogan
Kenneth Ingwalson
Karl Knaus
S. P. Lyle
Lester A. Schlup
W. B. Stout

# APPENDIX II

## FINANCING EXTENSION

THE high regard of the rural population and of the nation for the Extension Service is shown by the steady growth in the appropriations from 1914 to date. Some of these appropriations, such as those during World War I and for the Farm Labor program during World War II, have been of an emergency nature and have not recurred.

The grants given during the depression did not have to be matched or offset by the states. Other appropriations require that the states and counties pay a proportionate share of the total expense. All told, there have been four major bills, of which the Smith-Lever was the first, appropriating continuing funds to the Extension Service.

In 1949 federal appropriations totaled $30,532,000. Of this sum approximately half required offset. The remainder did not. The distribution of funds between federal, state, and local funds is shown in Table 2.

Thus, the total appropriations from all sources for this great agency of rural adult education is well over $60 million, over 98 per cent of it from tax funds. Particularly significant is the large increase in state and county appropriation between 1945 and 1948. It will be noted these exceed the federal grants.

### *FISCAL SUPERVISION*

Fiscal supervision is conducted from the national headquarters. To render an accounting for the use of taxpayers' money, indicating how the money was expended, is a necessary legal requirement. The procedures are somewhat complicated. Only the most salient features will be summarized here. On funds which must be raised within the state to offset the federal grant, each state must submit to the federal office a guarantee that the required sums will be available. This must be received prior to June 30 each year. When received the federal funds are made available. If the state defaults, the amount of the deficiency may be deducted from the state's allotment for the next year.

The states must also prepare and submit a budget statement showing how they expect to spend the funds, listing the amount for each major area of work and differentiating between funds used as offset and others.

The next step is to budget each project, showing the distribution of costs among such items as salary, supplies, equipment. The leader of each project accompanies this budget with a plan of work showing its objectives, procedures, cooperation with other agencies, calendar of

TABLE 1. FEDERAL EXTENSION FUNDS APPROPRIATED FOR ALLOCATION TO STATES, ALASKA, HAWAII, AND PUERTO RICO, INCLUDING OFFSET REQUIREMENTS AND BASIS FOR ALLOCATION—FISCAL YEAR 1948

| Item | Total Amount | Requiring Offset | | Not Requiring Offset | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *Amount* | *Basis for Allocation* | *Amount* | *Basis for Allocation* |
| Permanent annual appropriation Smith-Lever Act | $ 4,704,710 | $ 4,204,710 | Rural population | $ 500,000 | $10,000 to each state, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico |
| Capper-Ketcham Act | 1,480,000 | 500,000 | Rural population | 980,000 | $20,000 to each state and Hawaii |
| Bankhead-Jones Act | 12,000,000 | | | 11,020,000 | Farm population |
| | | | | 980,000 | $20,000 to each state and Hawaii |
| Bankhead-Jones extension to Puerto Rico | 274,000 | | | 20,000 | Lump sum |
| | | | | 254,000 | Farm population[1] |
| Bankhead-Flannagan Act | 8,330,000 | 7,830,000 | Farm population | | |
| | | 500,000 | Determined by Secretary of Agriculture[2] | | |
| Additional extension work | 555,000 | | | 555,000 | As allocated |
| Alaska Acts | 23,950 | 3,950 | Rural population | 20,000 | Lump sum, 1944 |
| Total direct federal allocations | $27,367,660[3] | $13,038,660[3] | | $14,329,000 | |
| Per cent | 100.0 | 47.6 | | 52.4 | |

[1] $388,000 authorized as Puerto Rico's proportional share on basis of farm population, but only $254,000 of this was appropriated for 1948.
[2] To meet special needs.
[3] In addition $89,103 was allocated to the states from Clark-McNary and Norris-Doxey funds for educational work in farm forestry.

TABLE 2. TOTAL ALLOCATIONS FOR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN THE STATES, ALASKA, HAWAII, AND PUERTO RICO, AND PERCENTAGE OF FUNDS DERIVED FROM INDICATED SOURCES, FOR SPECIFIED YEARS

| *Fiscal Year* | *Total Allocations* | *Federal* | *State* | *County* | *Other*[1] | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1,000 dollars* | *Per Cent* | *Per Cent* | *Per Cent* | *Per Cent* | *Per Cent* |
| 1915....... | 3,597 | 41.3 | 29.0 | 21.7 | 8.0 | 100.0 |
| 1920....... | 14,658 | 40.2 | 35.6 | 19.6 | 4.6 | 100.0 |
| 1925....... | 19,250 | 35.6 | 37.5 | 20.0 | 6.9 | 100.0 |
| 1930....... | 23,804 | 36.9 | 28.8 | 29.6 | 4.7 | 100.0 |
| 1935....... | 20,042 | 44.8 | 25.0 | 26.0 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| 1940....... | 32,764 | 56.7 | 19.3 | 20.6 | 3.4 | 100.0 |
| 1945....... | 37,836 | 50.2 | 23.7 | 22.9 | 3.2 | 100.0 |
| 1948....... | 58,463 | 47.0 | 29.3 | 21.0 | 2.7 | 100.0 |
| 1949....... | 65,733 | 48.4 | 28.7 | 21.7 | 3.2 | 100.0 |

Funds from non-governmental sources, largely local contributions from farm organizations.

TABLE 3. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION FUNDS BY SOURCES FOR INDICATED YEARS, 1915 TO 1949[1]

| *Year* | *Total* | *Federal* | *State* | *County* | *Other* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1,000 dollars* | *1,000 dollars* | *1,000 dollars* | *1,000 dollars* | *1,000 dollars* |
| 1915...... | 3,597 | 1,486 | 1,044 | 780 | 287 |
| 1920...... | 14,658 | 5,891 | 5,229 | 2,866 | 672 |
| 1925...... | 19,250 | 6,862 | 7,204 | 3,858 | 1,326 |
| 1930...... | 23,728 | 8,745 | 6,842 | 7,036 | 1,105 |
| 1935...... | 19,794 | 8,858 | 4,939 | 5,152 | 845 |
| 1940...... | 32,255 | 18,273 | 6,229 | 6,666 | 1,087 |
| 1945...... | 37,063 | 18,597 | 8,785 | 8,480 | 1,201 |
| 1948...... | 57,205 | 26,895 | 16,478 | 12,268 | 1,564 |
| 1949...... | 64,315 | 29,822 | 18,159 | 14,214 | 2,120 |

[1] To provide greater comparability Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, which have no county funds, are not included.

work, literature or other materials involved, and the like. This is accompanied with an appointment request for each person employed, together with a personnel data sheet.

## *FISCAL REPORTING*

At the close of the fiscal year each state director furnishes a financial statement showing how the funds were actually expended. Uniform schedules provided by the federal office are used. The statements are made in terms of the major funds available by projects and also in terms of such items as personnel services, travel, transportation of things, communication services, utility services and rents, printing and binding, other contractural services, supplies and materials, equipment,

and retirement contributions. County offset funds are also accounted for according to their uses.

Every year representatives of the federal Extension office are sent to the states, where they examine the state Extension accounts. The purpose of such annual examination is to make sure that expenditures of federal funds have been made according to the terms specified in the federal acts. Attention is also given to whether or not the state matching funds have been adequately provided for. In case of the discovery of the misuse of federal funds, the federal government requires that the misapplied funds be replaced by state funds before the state can receive further appropriation from Washington. Thus far, such instances have been very rare.

# APPENDIX III

## REPORTS AND RECORDS

REPORTS and records are the necessary bane of public servants. Extension is no exception. The Smith-Lever Act requires that an annual report on Extension activities be submitted to Congress. To meet this requirement the federal office requires reports from the states, and each of them in turn from the counties. Copies of county reports also go to the federal office. It has been estimated that preparation and processing of these annual reports cost about half a million dollars in the time of professional and clerical workers.

### *REASONS FOR REPORTS*

These reports are an accounting to the public of the tax monies secured from it. State and county reports should be submitted to the appropriating bodies at those levels of operation and in most cases are. Some counties produce excellent narrative reports with statistical summaries which are circulated widely within the area.

The reports build up a source of continuing materials on the operations of Extension and its results which are invaluable as a check on progress and in acquainting new staff members with the county and Extension's relation to it. They serve also as bench marks by which the Extension worker can judge the direction and success of his or her own work. They are further an invaluable means by which the state administrative and supervisory staff can gain an insight into county situations throughout the state, can detect situations requiring their attention, and can secure data on which to make promotions.

## *EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF REPORTS*

In addition, the annual reports, especially from the counties, serve very definite educational purposes. To the state specialist they indicate how the subject matter program with which he is concerned is being used in the counties. They reveal possible changes in materials or presentation to improve the offerings. Beyond this a number of states read the reports and cull for reference to all counties particularly successful programs, methods, or events which might be applicable elsewhere.

This process is carried further in the federal office, where each report is read and indexed. Anyone who needed to know, for instance, the best methods used anywhere in the nation or throughout the nation in teaching the eradication of poison ivy, the control of some pest, food preservation, nutritive value of and ways of preparing soya beans, and so on through all the thousands of topics handled, could request and receive such assistance in planning his or her own program.

## *TYPES OF REPORTS*

### COUNTY

County workers report the progress of their work to state headquarters monthly,[1] giving their itineraries, statistics on routine activities, and notes on developments. The federal office supplies a suggested form covering activities in different communities, the nature of work, types of assistance received from the college and other sources outside the county, a summary of activities which contains such items as days in office, days in field, number of county or community projects, leaders or committeemen added, number of adult home demonstration clubs organized, number of 4–H clubs organized, training meetings held for local leaders, and finally, narrative report.

The annual report summarizes and totals the statistical information of the monthly reports and adds a narrative of the year designed to present a comprehensive picture of the following important items:

1. What was attempted—the program as outlined at the beginning of the year.
2. How the work was carried on—the teaching methods employed.
3. The cooperation obtained from other Extension workers, rural people, commercial interests, and other public agencies.
4. Definite accomplishments, supported by objective evidence.
5. Significance of the year's progress and accomplishments in terms of better agriculture, better homemaking, improved boys' and girls' work, better rural living, etc.
6. How next year's work can be strengthened and improved in the light of the current year's experience.

[1] In some states reports are required weekly.

Attached to the narrative report one usually finds pictures which tell some interesting stories about important incidents that have happened during the year. Circular letters used may be included either in the text or in an appendix. To supplement the report, newspaper clippings are used to illustrate certain types of work which have received wide recognition by the public. Bulletins and leaflets sometimes accompany the report to show their effectiveness in spreading Extension influence. Maps, charts, and tables are commonly employed to present and visualize facts and to measure accomplishments.

Principles governing the preparation of a good annual narrative report have been very concisely stated by the Missouri State Extension Office. We read, "Complete narrative reports, like newspaper articles, should answer some of the questions, what, who, when, where and why. They should also give the 'How' fully and wind up with a sixth 'W' standing for 'What next' under Outlook and Recommendations."[2]

In the combined statistical report are found such items as general activities, which are reported separately by the home demonstration, 4–H club, and agricultural agents' work; summary of Extension influence this year, Extension organization and planning, cooperative agricultural planning, crop production, livestock production, conservation of natural resources, farm management, general economic problems related to agriculture, housing, farmstead improvement and equipment, nutrition and health, clothing, family economics, parent education and community life, summary of 4–H club boys' and girls' projects, and miscellaneous.

STATE

On the state level the state Extension director, the state supervisors, and the subject-matter specialists are all required to submit annual narrative reports. There are no specific regulations governing these reports. Some suggestions, however, have been made by the federal Extension office, indicating the desirability of obtaining uniformity in the reporting of activities and of making to the taxpaying public a more reliable annual accounting of stewardship.[3]

State Extension directors are naturally expected to stress administrative matters, such as changes in organization, duties and relationships of principal project leaders and relation to other institutions, organizations and agencies. Measures taken to strengthen supervision and improve specialist or county efficiency are recorded. Major develop-

[2] C. C. Hearne *et al.*, *Guide for County Extension Workers* (Agricultural Extension Service, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.), p. 26.

[3] M. L. Wilson, "To All State Extension Directors," together with four enclosures, November 13, 1943 (USDA Extension Office Stencil 1371–1375–'43).

ments that lie ahead are forecast, and each report obviously devotes attention to finances.

The supervisory staff reports deal with personnel problems, in-service training of workers, relationships, and programs. Subject-matter specialists cover the projected activities indicated in their annual plans of work. They deal with assistance rendered to county workers, cooperation with local and other agencies, relations to other specialists, and with supervisors and teaching methods and materials used. As with the county reports, those of the state workers are also indexed, and significant or original items judged to be helpful elsewhere are sent to all concerned by the appropriate federal staff member.

### FEDERAL

The federal office prepares several reports. One covers the over-all narrative of Extension for the year. There is also a statistical summary and a separate and somewhat more detailed report for each major area of Extension, agriculture, home economics, and 4–H club work. These last are chiefly summaries of the narrative reports from the states.

### RECORD FORMS

The suggestions offered by the federal office with reference to these reports are designed to facilitate the work of making the report. There is, for instance, a field diary form with two pages for each day. Space is provided for such items as official expenses, meetings held, attendance and subject, visits to and interviews with farm people, requests for information, and notes. There is also a daily office record on which the secretary notes the number of telephone calls, bulletins distributed, letters written, and office calls. Other forms relate to practices adopted, 4–H club records, and the like.

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